

A Discourse
Concerning the Danger of
APOSTASY,

Especially as to those that are the Children
and Posterity of such as have been
eminent for God in their
Generation.

*Delivered in a Sermon, preached in the Audi-
ence of the general Assembly of the Massachu-
setts Colony, at Boston in New England,
May 23. 1677. being the day of Election
there.*

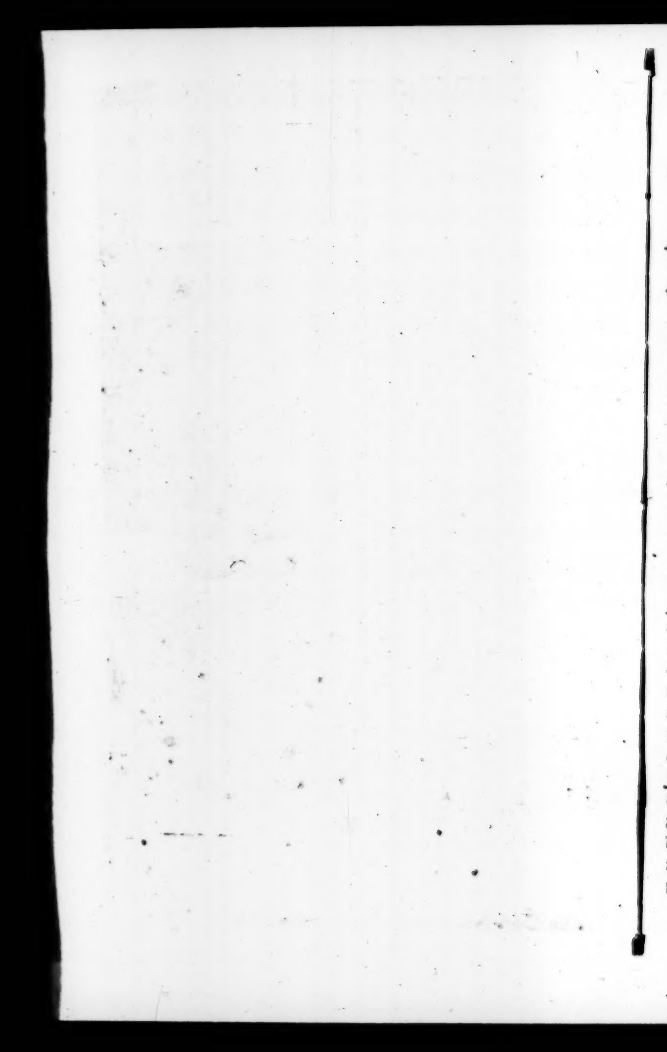
By *INCREASE MATHER*,
Teacher of a Church in Boston in New-England.

*Jer. 23. 28. He that bath my word, let him speak my
word faithfully.*

*1 Tim. 5. 21. I charge thee before God, and the Lord
Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe
these things, without preferring one before another,
doing nothing by partiality.*

*Tit. 2. 15. These things speak and exhort and rebuke
with all Authority.*

Boston, Printed in the Year, 1679.



To the Reader.

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THe Title-Page prefixed to this Discourse, intimates the Time and Occasion of its delivery. I had no cause to (nor did I) expect, that it would fall to my lot to speak, before the choice was made; If I had, I would have used means to prevent that trouble from coming upon my self or others. But it may be, God did it to prove me and see whether I would please men or Christ. And I hope I may (in some measure) say after the Apostle, We are bold in our God to speak. Our Exhortation was not of deceit, but even so we speak not as pleasing men but God, which tryeth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, nor of men sought we glory. *That great Reformer in Scotland, when upon his Death-bed, could say with comfort, That I did forbear none of what condition soever, I did it out of the fear of my God,* who hath placed me in the function of his Ministry, and I know will bring me to an account. even so I must confess, the awfull sense of the great opportunity which the Lord put into my hands to discharge my Conscience, in being witness to his Name and Truth, & of the account which I certainly know I must give to him, caused me to speak as I did; and to avoid more controversial Discourses. There is indeed one particular insisted on, which is now become a matter of scruple & distast to some amongst us, viz. that which concerns the Magistrates power in matters of Religion. But as it was by me either intended or expressed, I know not to this hour why any one should be offended at it. I may better speak in this cause then some others, as having my self had experience what it is to have Conscience imposed on, and therefore would be loth that any truly conscientious should be burdened; and it is sufficiently known that I have a greater latitude & indulgence in the point of Toleration, then many better

To the Reader

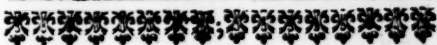
then myself have. Nevertheless, I judge it most unreasonable that pretended liberty of Conscience, should be an Asylum for the profaneſt errors to take Sanctuary in: as though men must therefore have liberty to Profane Sabbaths or Sacraments, or set up an Altar against the Lords Altar, and their Threshold by his Threshold, and their Posts by his Posts, when and where they please. It can not be, but the Lord will be provoked by such things; especially in New-England, where men are not under such Temptations to forsake their assembling themselves together, as in some other places: and where zeal on the other hand hath been notorious, so that such Lukewarmness will in a people, circumstanced as we are, be an evidence of Apostacy.

I remember I had once the happiness to be acquainted with an eminent Divine in an other part of the world, who having an opportunity to give his Testimony against a prevailing evil, which the greatest in that nation were at that time too far carried away with, in his Sermon had this Expression, What I have to say, if it were in a Church full of Kings I would speak it. Such a spirit I believe doth become an Ambassador of Christ, when delivering the Message of his Master Jesus. I shall therefore add no more at present,, only conclude, that if what is here expressed be but my own words or thoughts, its no great matter what's said, but if it be (as I am perswaded it is) the Word and Mind of Christ, then that God whose I am, and desire to serve, and in whose Name I have spoken, will surely confirm his word.

Boston, 22, day of the 2.

Moneth. 1678.

INCREASE NATHAN.



1 Chron. 28. 9.

But if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

AS there is a peculiar Excellency in all the Books of Scripture, becoming the Majesty of their Author; so it is in special maner true with respect unto this sacred Book of *Chronicles*; which is [a] not the same with those *Chronicles* we sometimes read of in the *Kings*, those being civil *Records*, but these wholly of a divine Inspiration, containing the History of no less then three thousand & five hundred years; even from the first man *Adam* unto the Jews Return from the *Babylonish Captivity*. & many years after that also. The Hebrews suppose it, (or at least some part of it) to be the last Book of Scripture that was written, and therefore they are wont to place it last in their Bibles, as the concluding Book of the old-Testament. The Greeks entitle it, [*ton paraleipomenon Biblion*,] Because divers things most worthy of eternal Commemoration, are related in these Books which are no where else to be found. So in this Chapter, we have *David's* solemn *Exhortation*. Words which deserve to be recorded, and yet are no where else seen (at least wise not in that ample manner) but in this Chapter. And it was in a very solemn Assembly that these words were spoken; Indeed in a general Assembly, when all the Lords people, both as to civil and Ecclesiastical order were come together, for the esta-

blishment of another Ruler amongst them, accordingly David doth here direct his Exhortation, first to the Representatives of the People, ver. 1. *And David assembled all the Princes of Israel, the Princes of the Tribes, and the Captains of the Companies unto himself, &c.* Hence they are said to be all Israel, ver. 8. *In the sight of all Israel*, h. e. the Heads and Representatives of all Israel, and therefore are said to be *the Congregation of the Lord*. Often in the Scripture by *the Congregation*, the Heads and Rulers of the Congregation are meant. Now the Exhortation unto them is, that they would *keep and seek all the Commandments of the Lord*, h. e. that they would observe what they did know, and seek to know more of the mind of God. The motive whereby he urgeth this, is, because the Lord had promised the good Land to them; but it was upon that condition of their keeping his Commandments, therefore it did highly concern them, to be careful about that matter. 2dly, he directs his Exhortation to him that was to be established as chief Ruler, scil. to his Son Solomon, whom God appointed to succeed his Father in the Government. Now sincerity was the main thing which David his Father did exhort him unto, in the beginning of this Verse. *And thou Solomon my Son know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind*. Is further urged from three motives, 1. consideration of the divine Omniscieny. *Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth the imaginations of the thoughts.* 2dly, From the benefit of good, which would follow upon seeking to him. *If thou seek him he will be found of thee.* 3. From the evil that is in forsaking him; In the words before us; which though they were spoken to Solomon, yet were they of equal concernment to all the people.

rising Generation.

others being Circumstanced as he was, *b. e.* that were of the younger, Rising, succeeding Generation, being also the Children and posterity of godly Parents. Especially, the words did and do concern those that are the *Posterity of David*, that is to say, of such as have been emineht Servants of God in their Generation. The Doctrine which would therefore (by the help of Christ) insist on, conceiving that it may not be altogether unsuitable for this great Audience, is this.

Doctr.

That if they that are the Children and Posterity of Gods eminent Servants shall forsake the Lord, he will cast them off for ever. In the doctrinal handling of this Truth, there are four things which may be briefly enquired into. 1. When men especially the Children of Gods Servants, may be said to forsake him? 2. What is implied, in this casting off for ever? 3. What forsaking of God that is, which will be attended, with such casting off. 4. The Reason of this dreadful procedure of the most High towards the Posterity of his People.

Quest. 1. *When may men be said to forsake the Lord?*

Ans. 1. *When they depart from the blessed Truths of God, then may they be said to forsake him.* Hence the Apostle chargeth it upon the Apostatizing Gathians, that they were removed from him that called them, Gal. 1. 6. *b. e.* they had forsaken God himself, because they had corrupted and forsaken the great Truths of the Gospel. All Truth is from God, therefore he is styled, *the God of Truth*, Deut. 32. 4. *Yea, Truth it self*, 1 Joh. 5. 6. And Truth is said to be his *Name*. Christ said to his faithful ones in the Church of Pergamus, *thou holdest fast my Name*, Rev. 2. 13. The Truths of Christ were much opposed by the Infidels, and by the Hereticks of those daves, only some did faithfully adhere thereunto; and these are said to

hold

hold fast his Name. So then to forsake the Truth is to forsake the Lords Name. Especially when there is Apostacy from great-Foundation Truths in Religion, the Lord is forsaken. Albeit every Truth hath the Name of God stamped upon it, yet there are some Truths which have more of his Name on them, than others have, that the disowning of them is absolutely to reject the Lord, namely fundamental Truths, which indeed are not many nor hard to be known. Moreover, when those Truths are disowned by Children, which their Fathers were eminently engaged in the profession of, (though they should not be fundamental in their natures) such Children may be said to forsake the Lord.

2. When men deify any other Object besides the Lord; They that set up other things in Gods stead, in their so doing forsake the Lord, so it is when men give religious worship to any other besides him, who alone ought to be feared, Thus the Children of Israel because they did worship Baal and Ashtaroth, h. e. the [b] Sun and Moon, (for those were the first Creatures that the Gentiles Idolized, and the Syrians called the Sun, Baal; and the Moon Ashtaroth) they are therefore charged with forsaking God, Judg. 2. 12, 13. Idolatry is the greatest Apostacy in the world. Such are by way of eminency styled forsakers of God, Deut. 32. 15. He forsook God,

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meaning that they did Apostatize to Idolatry, therefore in ver. 16. it is added that they provoked him to Jealousie with their strange Gods, that is to say, with new Gods or Idols, for new things are strange.

17. They sacrificed to new Gods which came newly up, whom their Fathers feared not. And this is true not only with respect unto that more gross Idolatry, when men shall avow the Service of Idols, but also concerning secret, spiritual, heart Idolatry, even
worldline.

worldliness, *Matth. 6. 24.* Ye cannot serve both God and Mammon. The Servants of Mammon, b. e. of the world, are forsakers of God, when men pour out the strength of their affections upon worldly Objects, or place their chief delight and confidence in these things, it argueth an heart departure from the Lord, *Jer. 17. 5.* If Fathers have sought Christ, and the things of Christ in the first place, and their Children shall come after them, and espouse a worldly Interest, it is a woful God-forsaking.

3. *There is a forsaking God, in respect of his holy Institutions.* Hence a people that are without Ordinances, are said to be without God, *2 Chron. 15. 3.* it is there mentioned, that *Israel had for a long season been without the true God*, because they had been without the Ministry, and without Ordinances. If those be not duly observed the Lord is forsaken, *Isai. 65. 11.* But ye are they that forsake the Lord, and forget my holy Mountain, so that to forget the holy Mountain, b. e. the neglect of divine worship and Ordinances, is a forsaking of the Lord. Look as when the Lord doth deprive a people of his Ordinances, he is said to forsake them, *Jer. 23. 32.* *I will even forsake you saith the Lord;* the meaning is (saith Calvin) you shall no more have Ministry and Ordinances, amongst you, so when they are willing to be deprived thereof, they may be said to forsake him, *Judg. 10. 6.* *they forsook the Lord, and served him not.* Not to regard the service of God is to forsake him. For in Ordinances we have to doe with God, *Heb. 4. 13.* in hearing the word, in Prayer, in Sabbath, in Sacraments, we have to doe with God. Or if the holy Ordinances be corrupted, then the Lord is forsaken. And so it is when men will be adding their inventions to Gods institutions, *Psal. 106. 39.* *They were they defiled with their own works, and went*

a whoring with their own inventions. When men follow their own inventions they goe a whoring from the Lord, of this nature were the high Places of old 2 Chron. 33. 17. *The People did sacrifice in the high places, yet to the Lord their God only.* Those high Places were lawfull to worship God in, until the Temple was built, but after that it was a breach of the second Commandment to place any Religion in them, and therefore in some degree a departure from the Lord. If Fathers have prized Ordinances above the world, and endeavoured to uphold them in their power and purity, but their Children after them shall not regard whether they enjoy the Ordinances of Christ or no, or if they doe, shall not be carefull and studious to keep them pure, according to Scripture Rule, they fall under this dreadful charge of Apostacy from God.

4. *There is a forsaking of God in respect of Conversation.* There are that by works doe deny God, Tit. 1. 16. An holy heavenly Conversation is expressed in the Scripture, by that of *walking with God*, Gen. 5. 24. & 6. 9. Therefore an evil conversation is a departure from God. It is called a forsaking the Law of the Lord, Jer. 9. 13. By a corrupt conversation men deviate from the Law, and are such Apostates as the Text speaketh of. In this respect those wicked men, whose foundation was destroyed with the flood, (as Eliphaz speaketh) even the sinners of the old world were Apostates from God. We doe not read of (nor doe I believe that there was) any Idolatry in the old world, but they were over run with Atheism, Pride, Sensuality, Uncleaness, Oppression, and the like scandalous Enormities. And the Apostacy of the Children of Israel, did consist partly in this, as we see in that wofull instance of the Benjamites, the greatest part of whom the Lord cast off for

for ever. Yea and the Antichristian Apostacy predicted in the New Testament, doth consist partly in this: We know that the Anti-Christian Generation (Papists I mean) are generally not only (as all of them are) horribly superstitious and idolatrous, but of most profane and debauched Consciences and conversations; in the Book of the Revelations we read of their murders, Sorceries, Fornications, Thefts, Rev. 9.21. If then the Children of the Covenant shall not walk worthy of God, but in the wayes of Pride, Sensuality, Vnrighteousness; If when Fathers have been of an holy, exemplary conversation their Children shall be unholy and profane, they are forsakers of God, concerning whom he hath threatened, to cast them off for ever.

5. *When the fear of God is wanting in the hearts of such as are above others bound to fear and serve him, they are forsakers of the Lord.* For there is an inward heart departure from God, as well as that which is outward and visible: So it is when there is no faith nor fear of God in the heart, Hebr. 3.12. *Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* Infidelity in the heart is the root of all Apostacy. If the Children of godly Parents shall not endeavour truly to fear and serve the Lord God of their Fathers, they are such as do forsake him, yea and such as he will cast off for ever. And therefore in this Context David did intimate unto his Son Solomon, that if he did not serve the Lord even with a perfect heart, he should be cast off for ever.

We proceed therefore to the second Question. viz.

Quest. *What is implied in this casting off for ever?*

Ans. 1. *It implyeth a charge as to divine Dispensations.* In the Scripture, when the Lord threatened to cast off his people, that is intended, viz. that he

would

would make an alteration as to the tenor of his dispensations towards them : here it is set in opposition to finding God, If thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off : Now finding God doth imply the enjoyment of his favour, and therefore in *Casting off* is implied the deprivation of the Lords favourable presence. It is indeed most true, that the special favour of God is unchangeable, Rom. 5. 2. *This Grace wherein we stand.* He that hath once access into the special grace and favour of God stands and abideth therein for ever, in respect of that there is no casting off for ever ; In the Covenant of grace the Lord hath promised saying, *I will not cast off the Seed of Israel for all that they have done,* Jer. 31. 37. But then there is common favour, in respect of outward blessings, which are the effects of common love, & that may utterly cease, *Hos. 9. 15. I will love them no more.* I have loved them, (saith the Lord) *i. e.* bestowed outward mercyes on them, but I will do so no more. They shall have no more such dayes of peace, no more such plenty, no more such means of grace as once they did enjoy. Thus of a friend the Lord may turn to be an Enemy, *Isai. 53. 10. But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit : therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and he fought against them.* Whilst a Covenant people, carry it so as not to break Covenant, the Lord blesteth them visibly, but if they degenerate then blessings are removed, and woful Judgements come in their room, & that's implied in this casting off which the Text speaketh of, *scil.* that mercyes shall be taken away, as it was said of Saul that when God cast him off he took away his mercy from him, 1 Chron. 17. 13. because he was deprived of that great outward blessing and dignity which once he did enjoy, And the sending of contrary miseries to those

those mercyes; that instead of peace there shall be Wars, instead of plenty poverty, instead of health terrible sicknesses, instead of planting, plucking up and destroying, these things are implied in this casting off, thus Psal. 89. 38. *But thou hast cast off and abhorred; thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.*

I conceive the Psalmist in those words hath [c] respect to the sad change of Providence which befel the Lords People in Rehoboamstime, for the Psalm was written by *Ethan*, who was contemporary with Solomon, and probably lived to see the woful changes which hapned five years after Solomons death, when the Land was invaded and sorely wasted by Heathen Enemies, and some (though not all) of the wrath of God poured out upon his people, and upon the Apostatized Children of David, strong holds were brought to ruine, and they did not stand in the day of Battel as in former times they had done, now these temporal Judgements are called a *casting off*. 2. *It doth imply a discovenanting and unburthning.* If the Children of godly Fathers shall forsake the Lord he will cast them off, *b. e.* it will at last come to this that the Lord will disown them; and excommunicate them, and say they are none of his, for although there is no falling from a state of saving grace, yet they that have only a visible interest in God may fall from that Estate, *what they have shall be taken from them.* They that are internally and sincerely in Covenant with God shall never lose their interest in the Covenant, for they are betrothed unto the Lord forever, *Hos. 2. 19.* But they that are externally in Covenant, may cease to be the Lords visible people; Thus it came to pass concerning the ten Tribes. Hence the Lord speaketh, as *Jer. 3. 8.*

Backsliding Israel committed Adultery, and I had put away and given her a Bill of divorce, so that the

[c] *For in locum*

marriage Covenant, which was between the Lord & them was dissolved, this is confirmed by the Prophet Hosea, Chap. 2. 2. where the Lord saith *plead with your mother, plead for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband*, so in Chap. 1. ver. 9. *Call his Name Lo-Ammi, for they are not my people, and I will not be your God*, therefore also the Lord by the Prophet Ezekiel calls the ten Tribes by the name of *Abolab*. The two Tribes the Jews, were then called by the name of *Abolibab*, which signifieth *my Tent*, because as yet God had not rejected them. But the ten Tribes are called *Abolab*, which signifieth *a Tent*, as if the Lord had said they are none of mine, now I have done with them and utterly rejected them, *Ezek. 23. 4*. Afterwards the Jews also were dis-covenanted and unchurched. The Prophet Zachariah had foretold that upon their unbelief, in rejecting Jesus Christ the only true Messiah, it should be so *I took my staff Beauty, and cut it aunder, that I might break my Covenant which I made with all the People*, Zach. 11. 10. And Paul tells us that sad Prediction was fulfilled, therefore Rom. 11. 12. he speaketh of *The Fall* of the Jews, meaning that they were fallen from their visible Church estate to be in the same condition which the Gentile world was in before the coming of Christ, so that they were fallen from heaven to earth; and in v. 20, 22. he speaketh of their being *broken off* and *cut off*, h.e. cut off from the visible Church, The Apostle [4] in that Chapter doth compare covenanting Abraham to a Root, and the visible Church to an Olive tree, of which there are two sorts of branches, 1. *Natural*, viz. the Jewish Church; 2. *Ingrafted*, i.e. the Church among the Gentiles. Now the natural branches were broken off: and therefore in the New Testament they are declared to be none of the Lords people, Rev. 19. 2.

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They call themselves Jews, but are not so, but are of the Synagogue of Satan. They say they are Jews, i.e. they boast of their being the Lords People, but in truth they are not so (saith Christ) they glory in the name of a Synagogue, but now they are not Gods Synagogue, but Satans. And in these dayes of the New-Testament the Lord hath disowned, & un-Churched these and those hat once were his People, Rev. 2.5. *I will remove the Candlestick out of his place.* That Threatning is not only fulfilled on Ephesus, but on all the Churches in Asia; there have been in former Ages bright and glorious Candlesticks in that part of the world, but they are long since all broken to pieces. The Romish Antichristian Idolatry, hath prevailed so far amongst Christians for above these thousand years, that they that are overrun therewith, Christ doth declare them to be looked upon, as Gentiles, as Heathens, and that they are not to be looked upon as within the Temple, or as indeed appertaining to the visible Church, Rev. 11.2. And this disowning and un-churching a people is called a *Casting them off*. 3. The expression here doth imply *everlasting rejection in the other world*. The Hebrew Phrase [*jazni chaka lagad*] *Arias Montanus* translateth *excrabitur te in aeternum*. If thou forsake him, he will make thee an eternal execration. Though it be a deep truth, that the line of election [+] doth for the most part run through the loins of godly parents, yet not only so, for men may be descended from godly Parents and Progenitors, and yet be the subjects of eternal Reprobation and Damnation. Math. 8.12. *The Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.* We read of one that could call *Abraham* his Father, and unto whom Abraham said *See* remember that in thy life time thou hadst thy good things, that ne-

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p. 25.

vertheless when he dyed, went to the place of *Torment*. If such Children forsake the Lord, it is not the prayers nor tears of godly Fathers that will save them; Nay, these will be an infinite aggravation of their misery. The tears of a godly Father, if his Children forsake the Lord, will make the flames of Eternal Fire burn the more fiercely upon their Souls for ever. Therefore well might David say to his Son Solomon, *If thou forsake the Lord, he will cast thee off for ever.*

We come in the next place to enquire, *what forsaking of God that is, that will be attended with this casting off?*

Ans^r. In two words, 1. *this must be understood concerning deep departures from God, and from his blessed wayes, Hos. 9. 9. They have deeply corrupted themselves therefore he will visit their sins.* The Lord is the God of patience, and of all grace, and thence is very slow in rejecting utterly a people, (or their Posterity) whom he hath once taken into Covenant with himself. Hence it is not lesser departures, but high and great offences against the Lord, that provokes him to cast off his People, e. g. *Idolatry* is a sin that causeth the rejection which the Text speaks of. Yea, it is true with reference unto that Idolatry which is against the second Commandment. When the Children of Israel committed that Idolatry respecting the Calf in the Wilderness, they sinned against the second Commandment, for they would worship the Lord still, only they would do it in such a way, and by such means as God never appointed, and they were in great danger of being cast off for this sin. Hence the Lord said to Moses, *My People have corrupted themselves*, Exod. 32. 7. The Lord doth not say *my People*, as he was wont to do, but *Thy People*, as if it were said; Now they have violated my Covenant.

Covenant, and deserve that I should for ever disown and reject them. The Asian Churches have been cast off for this sin especially ; we may read the sin of those Churches written in dreadful Characters, upon the Forehead of that Judgement which hath destroyed them all. God hath let loose the barbarous Turks upon them, who hate and destroy no men so much as those that worship Images. And as for the Church of Rome, the Apostle Paul did solemnly predict that they should be cast off, Rom. 11. 22. Now it is for this sin principally that the Lord hath cast them off. Again, Heresy causeth this casting off which the Text speaketh of, Societies consisting of such as disown the fundamental Truths of the Gospel, the Lord Jesus disowns them. Hence the Jews are disowned and rejected by the Lord, for although they own some fundamental Truths in Religion, indeed all [e] those six principles mentioned by the Apostle to the Hebrews, (Cap 6. 1, 2,) the Jews acknowledge, yet there are other foundation Truths, which they reject ; That Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, that Messiah is God as well as man, the Doctrine of original sin, and of salvation by imputed righteousness, all which things are necessary to be believed in order to eternal life, this do they reject and disown ; and therefore the Lord hath cast them off. when a People shall be so far degenerate as to loose the Essentials of Religion, they are the Lords no longer. Heretical Assemblies may be the Flocks of those that pretend to be Christs companions, but they are none of Christs Flocks, Can. 1. 7. So for scandalous miscarriages in life & conversation, these provoke the Lord to cast off a professing People. In a building, if once the materials be rotted & corrupted, the house will moulder away, the matter being an Essential Cause, And in Church

[e] 1st. Cap. 6. 1. in Heb 6. 1.

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building we know that Saints are the material cause; and therefore scandal in life doth destroy the Essentials of a Church, and so brings along with it this casting off which the Text speaks of. 2. *It is an Impenitent, incorrigible forsaking God*, that doth cause him to cast off a people or person. Solomon was guilty (notwithstanding the solemn dying charge of his Father to the contrary) of dreadful forsakings and Apostasies from the Lord, but he repented of them, as we see by the book of *Ecclesiastes*, and therefore the Lord did not wholly cast him off for ever. Notwithstanding great degeneracy in a People, the Lord is not wont to cast them off until he hath used all means for their Recovery, so it was with the Children of Israel of old, 2 Chron. 36. 15. The Scripture hath recorded the names of above twenty Prophets which the Lord sent to his People of old to tell them of their backslidings, and call upon them to repent and reform, before he would cast them off. And though in these dayes of the New-Testament, because men sin against greater light and grace, then in former times, the Lord Jesus maketh quicker work, with an Apostatizing People, then in the dayes of old, and in the years of ancient Generations; and therefore he said to the Church in Ephesus, *except thou consider whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, I will come against thee quickly, and remove the Candlestick out of his place*; nevertheless, he useth means to reduce and recover a backsliding People, before he casts them off, so he did with the Asian Churches, and so hath he done with the Anti-Christian Generation, and therefore raised up great Instruments, who have preached the Everlasting Gospel with a loud voice, and called for Reformation; and might therefore say [cf. Jer. 51. 9. *It would have healed Babylon, and she is healed*]

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beated, therefore her Judgement reacheth unto Heaven and is lifted up even to the Skies. The Lord doth give a first and second admonition before he doth reject; He tryeth what his Word will do, what lesser and greater Judgements will do, yea, and what mercies and deliverances will do, and if nothing will prevail, then he calls off forever. If a Generation be Apostate, and Incurably Apostate, it will not be long before God doth cast them off forever, Jer. 15.5,7. *Tbou hast forsaken me saith the Lord, thou art gone backward, therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, I will destroy my People sith they return not from their ways.* In a word, when Apostacy is total and final then the Lord doth reject men, yea, though the Children and Posterity of his own Servants, he calls them off forever.

Quest. But why so?

Ans. For such Reasons as these.

Reas. 1. Because the Transgressions of such Children as the Doctrine speaks of are peculiar provocations; if the Children of David sin their iniquity is attended with special aggravations. They sin against greater light, and love, and grace, then may be said of any persons in the world besides; They that rebel against the Light do at last provoke the Lord utterly to reject them. Hence it is that refusing Instruction, is mentioned as the grand procuring cause of this Rejection, Jer. 6.8. *Be instructed O Jerusalem lest my Soul depart from thee, Thou become desolate.* Now thus it is when the Children of Godly Parents forsake the Lord, as Solomon doth acknowledge, how diligent and faithful his blessed Father had been in instructing of him, Prov. 4.3,4. *I was my Fathers Son, he taught me also, and said unto me keep my Commandments and live.* And sins against grace, and peculiar mercy do without Repentance

A Call to the

end in Everlasting Rejection, Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.* Who ever escape (saith the Lord) to be sure you shall not, because you sin against greater grace and favour then any others in the World ever did. For these causes the Lord threatned Eli that he would cut off his Arm, and the Arm of his Fathers house, inasmuch as he had sinned against peculiar mercies and favours. Especially, sins against tenders of Gospel grace provoke the Lord to cast men off, Math. 23. 37, 38. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you, as an Hen her Chickens under her wings but ye would not, and now your house is left unto you desolate.* And this is sadly true concerning the Children of godly Parents, they sin against special favours from the Lord, the means of grace is vouchsafed to them, they have many blessed strivings of the holy Spirit with them, which others have not, therefore if they forsake the Lord no wonder if he cast them off for ever.

Reas. 2. Because such Children are guilty of lamentable Covenant breaking before the Lord, for the Covenant is with Children as well as Parents, Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12. *You and your little ones do enter into Covenant,* upon this account David saith that the Lord was his God from his Infancy, yea, from his first coming into the world, Psal. 22. 10, And the like is noted concerning Solomon, and therefore his Father said to him, *my Son build the house of the Lord thy God,* 1 Chron. 22. 11. The Lord is not only *my God*, but in respect of his gracious Covenant he is *thy God* also. And this seems to be the reason why Abraham is styled the Father of the faithful, [g] merely on the Covenant of the eminency of his birth, for we read of others in the Scripture, whose birth was not inferior to Abrahams, but in that

[g]

See Mr.

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the first unto whom God expressly declared, *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed*, and withal appointed a sacred sign and Seal of this Covenant. Now Abrahams Covenant is as to the substance of it *Everlasting*. And therefore the Children of the faithful in all Ages, are wrapped under the bond of the Covenant, otherwise there would be a substantial change of the Covenant from what it was at first, then which nothing can be more contradictory to the whole tenour and current of the Scripture. The Apostle therefore testifieth *that the blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*, Gal. 3. 14. As God said unto Abraham, I take thee and thy Children into Covenant with my self, so doth he through Jesus Christ say the like to every believing Parent among the Gentiles; And therefore the Lord Jesus did affirm concerning Children, *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Math. 19. 14. [b] It is not only true (saith Christ) that Children did belong to God under the old-Testament; but now that, *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, now that the Church is to be under the heavenly dispensation of the Gospel, Children must be acknowledged there also. And it is for-ever to be observed, that when the New-Testament dispensation was ready to be established, the ancient grant concerning Childrens Interest in the Covenant is expressly confirmed, Act. 2. 39. *The promise is to you and to your Children*. Hence then, if such Children do forsake the Lord, they are guilty of violating the Covenant. Now that's an iniquity which doth provoke the Lord to cast off those that are deeply guilty of it, Isai. 24. 5, 6. *They have broken the Everlasting Covenant, therefore they are cursed, barren, desolate*. In old time it was the manner that when a Covenant was made, some Creature or other was killed, and cut in pieces, by which rite was

[b] *Mr. Burroughs on Math. 5. 3. p. 61.*

signified, that the Lord would kill and cut off him, that being in Covenant with God, did not make conscience, faithfully to keep and observe, that Covenant inviolable for-ever.

Resf. 3. From that infinite indignation, which is in the Lords heart against Apostates. They are fugitives from Christ, and deserting their Captain, the Lord himself will execute Martial Law upon them. No sinners are greater Objects of divine hatred and indignation. Hence the Apostle said unto the Hebrews, when some of them were ready to Apostatize from Christianity to Judaisme, if any man draw back the Soul of God shall take no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38. meaning that such Creatures, are Vessels of dishonour, and the most loathsome Objects that can be thought of. Hence the Lord doth pursue them with infinite vengeance, he cuts them off, and casts them off for-ever. As that miserable *Spirs* at the very moment, when he had renounced the Truth, thought he heard one say to him; *Hence thou Apostate, and receive the Sentence of thy Eternal Damnation.* The Lord is wont to leave marks of his wrath upon such sinners. He brands them, that all the world may be afraid of that iniquity, seldome hath it been known that any have notoriously turned away from the Lord, but visible wrath from Heaven hath fallen upon them. *Iehoram* had been religiously educated under his godly Father *Jehoiaphat*, but he proved the Apostate child of a gracious Father; And what came on him? God let loose the Heathen Arabians, who wasted his Estate, and murdered all his Children save one. Thus did the Lord cast him off. *Joash* was religiously educated under uncle *Jehoiadah*, but he forsook the Lord, therefore the Assyrians with a small Army destroyed a great Host of his; And afterwards his own treacher

Servants murdered him. The like we read concerning *Amaziah*. And Histories (besides what is recorded in the Scripture) are full of awful and amazing Examples of the Lords indignation against Apostates, and therefore since if Davids Children do forsake the Lord, they are to be reckoned amongst the number of Apostates, no wonder that he doth threaten to cast them off forever.

We proceed now to a word of Application, and shall insist upon one only use of *Exhortation*, let us be exhorted in the Name and Fear of God this day, to endeavour that it may not be with us, as the Text and Doctrine expresseth, let us every one in our several places, and capacities endeavour that the present and succeeding Generations in New-England, may not forsake the Lord God of their Fathers, & so endanger their being cast off forever.

USE

Wherefore Consider, 1. *What Fathers and Predecessors have been*, they were such as did seek the Lord. As for the body of the present Generation in New-England, it may be said to them, your Fathers were such as did serve the Lord, yea, it was love to God, and to Jesus Christ, which brought them into this Wilderness. As the Lord speaketh, Jer. 2. 2. *I remember the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine Espousals, when thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land which was not sown.* Our Fathers did not, in their coming hither propound any great matters to themselves respecting this world; only that they should have liberty to serve God; & to walk with him in all the wayes of his worship. As one of our worthies hath aptly expressed, God sifted three Nations, that so he might bring over choice grain into this wilderness. Is then remember what New-England hath been, it hath been a noble Plant, Jer. 2. 21. *I planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed.* It hath been a Cedar

dar, our Eyes have seen the Lord fulfilling that Scripture literally & gloriously, *Isai. 41. 19. I will plant in the Wilderness a Cedar.* The chief of the Fathers in these New-English Churches, they were *Abrahams*. He, when God called him removed out of *Ur* of the Chaldees, to the place which the Lord would shew him, & there built an Altar to the Everlasting God, so did our Fathers remove out of their own Land, when God called them, and came hither, to build an Altar here to the Everlasting God, yea, and they have set the Altar upon its right Basis too. Our Fathers have been *Dauids*, that is to say, *eminent Reformers*. Let me speak freely (without offence to any) there never was a Generation that did so perfectly shake off the dust of *Babylon*, both as to Ecclesiastical and civil Constitution, as the first Generation of Christians, that came into this Land for the Gospels sake, where, was there ever a place so like unto new Jerusalem as New-England hath been? It was once Dr. *Twiss* his opinion, [i] that when new-Jerusalem should come down from Heaven America would be the Seat of it. Truly that such a Type and emblem of new-Jerusalem, shou'd be erected in so dark a corner of the world, is matter of deep meditation and admiration.

[i] See Dr
Twiss
Letters
written in
Mr. Medes
works.
vol. 4.
Epist. 2.
979.

Consider, 2. How subject men are, yea, the Children of blessed Parents and Predecessors to Apostatize from God. It is possible that the Children of David may forsake the Lord, and that in a short time too, when Predecessors have been eminent for God, their Successors have been most degenerate, *Jer. 2. 21. I wanted thee wholly a right Seed, how art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange Vine unto me, Isai. 1. 21. How is the faithful City become an Harlot? it was full of Judgement, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.* It was sometimes said unto good Samuel, 169
Sons

Sons walk not in thy wayes. And it is noted concerning *Nabal* (a drunken Sot) that he was of the house of *Caleb*, 1 Sam. 25. 3. That ever such a branch should spring out of such a Stock. The Ephraimites were the vile & Idolaters of all the Apostate Children of Israel, yet they were the Posterity of Joseph the best of Jacobs twelve Sons. The perfidious and ungrateful Ziphites were also the posterity of that blessed *Caleb* but now mentioned. Yea, it is a sad Truth, that Religion hath seldome been upheld in the power of it, for above one or two Generations together. Therefore it is recorded concerning the Children of Israel, *they turned quickly out of the way which their Fathers walked in, obeying the Commandments of the Lord, but they did not so*, Judg. 2. 17. The Fathers and Leaders both of the first and second Generation were for purity of worship, but their Children were not so. Their Fathers did endeavour to uphold Religion in the power of it, but *their Children did not so*. Their Fathers did order their conversation according to the holy Rules of the word of God, but *their Children did not so*. Hence is that sad complaint by the Prophet, *they rose early and corrupted all their doings*, Zeph. 3. 7. And if we look into the Scripture and view the story of former Ages, we shall see this to be true. The Posterity of the Lords Servants, the Children of the Church have in a little time so forsaken him, as that solemn Reformation hath been necessary. Look beyond the Flood and we shall see it so. One of Adams Children with all his numerous Posterity forsook the Lord, Cain was excommunicate out of the Church and became the Father of an excommunicate race and Generation. The first Church that ever was in the world, even that in Adam's Family continued in some measure pure, about the space [k] of an hundred and thirty years [l] 6

years, (*b. e.* until Seth was born) but then great Apostacy prevailed. When the Church was small in one Family, it was more easy to keep it pure, by casting out the Apostates, but now the world grew numerous, & a multitude of sinners caused impunity in sin, so as that they that were godly and conscientious were slain in the very beginning or first Ages and Generations of the world, to separate themselves and become distinct societies. Hence is that, *Gen. 4. 26. then began men to call upon the Name of the Lord.* It noteth a separation of the Church from the prophane world. After this, a second Apostacy followed, that the Church and world were mixed together, even the Sons of God and daughters of men, the Posterity of godly *Seth* and of wicked *Cain*, until such time as the flood came and cleared the world of them, *Gen. 6. 2.* Then were the Inhabitants of the Earth in a most corrupt Estate, wherefore the Psalmist (as it seems) alluding to that time saith, *the Lord looked down from Heaven, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God, every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy,* *Psal. 53. 2, 3.* After Religion was revived in Noah's Family, his Posterity quickly forsook the Lord, *Cham's* Apostacy was (as some Learned men observe) about forty years after the flood. The Church was reformed by his ejection, but within sixty or seventy years after that, the builders of Babel set upon their wicked attempt, which was desperate Rebellion against the Lord, although Noah himself was then alive, he could not by all his Authority restrain his grand Children and Posterity, but they would needs become guilty of that Babel defection. After this, with a few Generations the world was overrun with Idolatry. When that iniquity first began is hard say, but it is evident that in *Jobs* time (who thoug

thought to live about three hundred and fifty years after the Flood) the world was filled with Idolaters, yea, in Abrahams time there was such Apostacy as that Religion was almost gone out of the world; only in his Family there was a pure Church established. Yet his Posterity did quickly forsake the Lord. The Ishmaelites, Midianites, Edomites, (and other Nations) who were of the Posterity of Abraham, the Father of the faithful, in a few Generations lost the substantials of Religion, and were wholly deprived of their Church Estate. The Church was settled in Jacobs Family. Corruption and Superstition did creep into his Family, so as that he was fain to set upon a work of solemn Reformation, and that was not two hundred years after the Reformation begun in his grand-Father Abrahams Family. After the Church was become National, the truth and power of Religion did very rarely continue above one or two Generations at the most (sometimes not so long) witness that Scripture † which was worthily opened and applyed in this place upon the like solemn occasion two years ago, † By A Mood
Judg. 2. 7, 10. And the People served the Lord all the dayes of Joshua, and all the dayes of the Elders that out-lived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. And all that Generation were gathered unto their Fathers, and there arose another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. Those that were the grand-Children of that Generation which was brought out of Egypt, did forsake the God of their Fathers. Hence is that expression, Hos. 10. 9. O Israel thou hast sinned from the dayes of Gibeah, what horrible wickedness was in Gibeah, we may read in the nineteenth & twentieth Chapters of the Book of Judges, where we have

the Story of the Levites Concubine, which though it be mentioned towards the close of that Book, yet it seems evident that it hapned before the Judges, for it seems that Jebus (afterwards Jerusalem) was not then taken, Judg. 19. 11, 12. when as that was taken by the Children of Israel before they were governed by Judges, Chap. 1. ver. 8. So that the wickedness of Gibeah, and their war with the Benjamites, which followed thereupon, was between the death of Ioshuah and the Judges. Moreover, Phinehas the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron was Priest in those dayes, Judg. 20. 28. which maketh it very manifest that, that most corrupt Generation, were the grand-Children of those, that were first embodied as a peculiar People, when the Lord did plant the Heavens, and lay the Foundations of the Earth, that is to say, did build up the Children of Israel as a body politick under Ecclesiastical and civil government, the *third Generation* among that People proved degenerate and apostate. And when they were under a *Theocracy* or Government by Judges, whom the Lord immediately raised up and set over them, how soon did they turn aside from God; when any of their faithful Judges were taken from them, Judg. 2. 19. So in the dayes of the Kings. After Davids Reformation Apostacy began in the very next Generation, in the dayes of his Son Solomon, and in the dayes of his grand-Child Rehoboam *all Israel forsook the Lord, untill God by a sad war awakened them to some Reformation.* In Jehoshaphats time Religion was upheld in some power; but in the very next Generation there was Apostacy, Hezekiah was a great Reformer, but his Son Manasseh built up againe the high places, which his Father had destroyed, and seduced the People to *more evil then did the Nation, whom the Lord destroyed before the Children*

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Men of Israel. After this, Josiah wrought a great Reformation, and with him did the work of Reformation and Religion, die amongst the Jews, upon Josiah's death a flood of Land destroying sins brake in upon that Generation, that within the space of two and twenty years after Josiah was gathered unto his Fathers, the Jewish State both Civil and Ecclesiastical was quite overthrown; After the Captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Prophets Haggai and Zachary were great Reformers; But Apostasy quickly prevailed, witness the Prophet *Malachi*, who declareth that not only People but Rulers many of them in his dayes, were become very corrupt. Albeit they were not guilty of that more gross Idolatry, for which their Fathers were sent into Captivity, yet Concubines, which is a spiritual Idolatry they were guilty of, whereby they provoked the Lord to send blasting Providences upon them, there being no greater punishment to a covetous man then to have the world taken from him. That Generation did not keep themselves unspotted of the World, upon which account, they are by the Prophet pronounced unclean, Hag 2. 13, 14. And when Christ came into the world, he found the Jews in a most degenerate corrupt Estate. Therefore did the Lord call them an *evil* and an *Adulterous*, and a *viperous Generation*.

Furthermore, since the Church hath been by divine Institution *Congregational*, in these dayes of the New-Testament, men have been no less subject to Apostasy then in former Ages. The Churches in Galatia were strangely and suddenly overrun with corrupt Doctrine. Hence the Apostle saith, Gal. 1. 6. *I marvel that you are so soon removed unto another Gospel.* He might well marvel, if the observation of [A] great Chronologers be true, that within a year
after

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after Paul was removed from Galatia to Ephesus, false Teachers succeeded him, and overthrew his Foundation, by endeavouring to advance a mixt Religion consisting of Judaisme and Christianity. And I remember *Ferom*, [m] testifyeth that in his time all Galatia was overrun with damnable Heresies. And as for the Church in Ephesus they quickly declined, Rev, 2, 5. *Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works.* It was (as Historians observe) about twenty years after the Ascension of Christ that Paul gathered a Church amongst the Ephesians. And sixty years after the Ascension, the Book of the Revelation was written; So that there had been a Church in that place about forty years; In which time the first members of the Church must needs (in probability) as to the body of them be dead, and another Generation of Church members were risen up which were not like the first. The Church in *Thyatira*, though not so Apostate when the Revelation was written as some other Churches, yet Ecclesiastical Story mentions how that in a few years after that, there was no Church in that place; which was one Reason why some antient Hereticks [n] denied the divine Authority of the *Apocalyps*. Because therein mention is made of a Church in *Thyatira*, when as (said they) no Church is to be seen there. To which the Answer is that there had been a Church there only the *Cataphrygian* Heresy did prevail so, as in a little time to swallow up the whole Church. In a word, in all those places, which we read of in the Scripture as having Churches in them, they that are the Successors at this day, are not like unto them that once were in those very places. In many places they have only the name not the Truth of Christianity, and in some not so much as the name. Albeit, when time was, famous Churches might have

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have been seen in those places. In former Ages *Asia* was the Seat of the Church, when as in these latter Ages *Europe* is so, [o] which is judged the Reason why the Book of Revelation speaks of Events to come [o] *Mal* to pass chiefly in Europe; because since the ten Kings arose there, hath the Lord Christ seen meet to uphold and propagate his Church. What shall be said more? It is evident that in the Apostles dayes, the mystery of iniquity began to work; much more after they fell asleep, *Ebion* and *Cerintus* sprang up whilst the Apottle *John* was yet living. The very next Ages to the Apostles began to depart from, and corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel, in divers respects that might be mentioned, † one long since observed, that although the Church continued a Vir- *Hegelyp-* gin until after the Apostles death, then it was soon *pm* corrupted. It is conceived that *Jude* lived after most of the other Apostles were dead, which is judged to be the reason of his expressing himself as he doth in ver. 17. of his Epistle. Now he complaineth much of a great degeneracy amongst those that professed Christianity.

Consider, 3. *The present Generation is New-England is lamentably degenerate.* As sometimes Moses spake to the Children of Israel, Num. 32. 14. *Behold ye are risen up in your Fathers stead an increase of sinful men.* So may we say, the first Generation of Christians in New-England, is in a manner gone off the Stage, and there is another and more sinful Generation risen up in their stead. We have in former years enjoyed a sun shine of prosperity, and that hath been attended (as useth to be) with great Apostasy. It is an apt similitude which some use, that as the heat of the Sun in Summer breeds a multitude of In- *ts*, so doth the warmth of prosperity a multitude of Apostates. Men are loth to hear on this Ear, but

if we should deny it, the Lord doth testify against us that it is so, as Joel 1.2. *Hear this ye old men and give Ear all ye Inhabitants of the Land, hath this been in your dayes, or even in the dayes of your Fathers saith the Lord.* Were there (saith the Prophet) such Judgements formerly as now there are, you may therefore conclude that you are departed from God, and by your sins have provoked him so to punish you. This may it be spoken with reference to our State & Case, and the dispensations of God towards us, you old men that are here before the Lord this day, what say you to this Question, did you know such Judgements upon New-England formerly, as of late we have seen? was it so in the dayes of our Fathers? were there such general and killing diseases? such a long continuing warr? so many hundreds cut off by the Sword, yea, so many hundred Families brought to ruine? Candlesticks removed out of their places, and Plantations made desolate! In former times we heard of little besides settlement of Plantations, and gathering of Churches, but of late years, in stead of that, ruines have been multiplyed, yea, mischief upon mischief. God hath been spending his Arrows, and heaping mischief upon this Generation. This Generation is not like the first. How many ignorant ones? how many scandalous ones? There is great rudeness amongst young ones in this Land; and in that respect degeneracy from the good manners of the Christian world. And such sins as formerly were not known in New-England are now become common, such as swearing, sinful gaming, &c. yea, the present Generation as to the body of it, is an unconverted Generation. I would not lessen the grace of God, I know that through grace many of the younger Generation are brought home to God in Jesus Christ, yet in many (I doubt in most) Congregations, the number of sincere convert-

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converts is but small, comparatively with those that remain still in a natural & unconverted Estate. And as for some that have the Root of the matter in them, yet they fall much short of their Fathers grace. Solomon was a good man and his Soul is now in Heaven, yet he was not like David his Father as to measure of grace and faithfulness, 1 *King*. 11. 6. we may see here and there, one that hath much of his blessed Fathers Spirit and Principles, but how rare are such amongst us? Nay, the Interest of *New-England* is now changed, from a Religious to a worldly Interest; and in this thing is the great Radical Apostasy of *New-England*. Is not this to chuse a strange God? Hence do we see war in the gates. And the Lord hath been letting this Generation blood in the right vein, since he hath taken the world away from them. Trade is almost ruined, Farms, Oxen, Merchandise, which things have been sought after in the first place, how have they failed? *New-England* is not like this twenty years, to be in that comfortable Estate it was in but two years agoe.

Consider, 4. *There is sad cause to fear what will at last come on this Generation.* There is a consumption on Religion all the world over, as one well observeth [p]. v. F. [p] the buryals of Christians are frequent and their filling birth is rare. And as for what concerns ourselves *Scriptum* more peculiarly, we may fear that there will be *In Epist.* greater Apostasy, because they that should have prevented it are gone. Many times the removal of a few eminent Servants of God in the Common-wealth, or in the Churches, maketh way for great Apostasy quickly to ensue. was it not so with the Children of Israel? when they had a good Judge over them, they would serve the Lord all the days of that Judge, but it came to pass when the Judge was dead, they returned and corrupted themselves more then their

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Fathers, Judg. 2. 18, 19. In Nehemiahs time while he was Governour for twelve years together, things went well, and God blessed the Land wonderfully; but when he was removed, in one years time those sins of oppression, sensuality, Sabbath breaking, were become prevailing common evils, Neh. 13. 6. Alas! our Nehemiahs are gone, (I speak it not to reflect upon those that survive, but to awaken from the consideration of our solemn bereavements) our Pauls are likewise departed from amongst us, in which respect we may fear corruption in Religion will follow, Acts 20, 29. Deut. 31. 27. Judg. 8. 33. Have we not seen it in some places, how that within a year after the death of such an eminent Servant of Christ, Apostasy to this day irrecoverable hath prevailed? Furthermore, the heads of the second Generation, that were most likely to have done good, the Lord hath snatched them away, and (like Enoch) translated them to Heaven, in the midst of their dayes; others that are most likely to prevent backsliding, and to be Instruments of reforming a corrupted Generation, are not likely to continue long in this evil world, yea, and of late even since the present warr, that we are bleeding under, began, the Lord hath taken away many young ones, either by Sword or sickness, who were the hopes of the Generation. In many Plantations, they that have dyed of late, were the most hopeful and desirable young men in the places where they lived, an Ominous sign that there is some terrible thing, which God will do, ere this Generation be passed away.

Consider, *How sad it would be if succeeding Generations should forsake the Lord.* It is evident, from the considerations mentioned, that it may be so; it would be dismal if, indeed it should be so. *England* would then become of all Lands the darkest and miserable. How sadly doth the Promise

Speak of *Bethaven*, now what was that *Bethaven*? even the same that was in former times *Bethel*, i. e. the house of God, *Hof. 4. 15.* with *1 King. 12. 29.* *Am. 5. 5.* If such places where the house of God hath been erected do once degenerate, they are like to become *Bethavens*, places of greatest vanity and iniquity in the world. Hence is that, *Hof. 9. 15.* *all their wickedness is in Gilgal.* *Gilgal* was once famous upon Religious accounts. *There* was the Covenant renewed by Circumcision, *there* was the first Passover kept by the Children of Israel, after their coming into the promised Land, *there* did God appear to *Joshua*, *there* was to be seen a famous Monument of the Lords doing wonders for his people, *there* was the Tabernacle for some time, but in after Generations an Idolatrous Temple was built there, so as that it was a fountain of much wickedness. *All their wickedness was in Gilgal.* It seemeth the Altar of witness was near that place, which through mens corruptions might easily be abused unto much Superstition in after Ages. The Devil seeketh to corrupt those places especially, which once were famous for Religion. As *Polsaus* observeth that *Wittenberge* in Germany was the Town where the Reformation in *Luthers* time began, and therefore the Devil did seek to corrupt that place especially, and caused it to become the Seat of grievous Heresies. What Land under Heaven, hath been more noted for profession and Religion, then *New-England*? If Apostacy prevail amongst such a People, it is like to be a sad Apostacy indeed. We see it already; Hence there are such sad complaints of young men that have been bred and born in *New-England*, when they go abroad into other Lands that none are so debauched and prophane as some of them. If the Lord should be provoked to pluck up the Hedge of civil government, what a fearful flood

*Palsus
Hof. 9*

of iniquity would soon break in? How would mad-
ded and enraged profaneness know no bounds? yea,
this Land would become as Sodom, and then most
desolating plagues will in short time follow, Ezek. 33.
28. what became of Cain's degenerate race? when
they were become, I know not how many millions,
the flood swept away every mothers child of them.
wherefore all the Children of men that are now in
the world are styled *the Children of Setb*, Numb. 24.
17. [q] because as for Cain's Apostate Generation
they all perished in the flood. When the old world
did Apostatize, after the Reformation in the dayes of
Setb, that second Apostasy proved fatal. If Church-
es in New-England degenerate, it is an Apostasy af-
ter Reformation. How fatal is such a relapse like
to be? will not the end thereof be with a flood? And
truly to be amongst the last Apostates, will be most
woful.

Quest. *But what shall be done in order to prevention of
Apostasy?* what shall be done, that so succeeding Ge-
nerations in *New-England* may not forsake the Lord
God of their Fathers?

Ans. As I have been meditating an Answer to
this Enquiry, I could not but call to mind that Scrip-
ture which some of the chief of the Fathers (at least
wise those two, [4] whom I have more Reason then
any one in the world to think of) have upon the like
solemn occasion, improved many years since, I mean
that Scripture, Hag. 2. 4. *Yet now be strong O Zerub-
babel saith the Lord, and be strong O Joshua, and be strong
all ye People of the Land.* If Zerubbabel, Joshua, and
the People of the Land, if Magistrates, Ministers, and
People all do what duty requireth, the feared Ap-
stasy, together with the unavoidable calamity coming
therewith, may be prevented, however in great
measure and for a long time.

[q] Bel-
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1. Let me apply my Speech unto Zerubbabels, *b.e.* Rulers in the Common-Wealth. Honoured and much esteemed, the welfare or ill fare of the present, yea, and following Generation doth much depend upon you. *Magistrates* are in the Scripture compared to *Corner stones*, because where there is a Common-Wealth erected, the safety of the whole building (under God) depends much upon them. Hence are they also termed Foundations, *Psal.* 11. 3. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? If David had perished, Foundations had been destroyed, and the good People of the Land would have dearly felt the loss of him. And when in Saule's time there were corrupt Judges and Magistrates, it is therefore said, that the *Foundations* of the Earth were out of Course, *Psal.* 82. 5. And the Prophet Micah speaking to the Rulers in the Common-wealth of Israel saith, *kear ye Foundations of the Earth*, *Mic.* 6. 2. It is with you (by the help of Christ) to lay such Foundations as shall make Posterity either happy or miserable. David improved the power which God in his Providence entrusted him with, *to serve his Generation according to the will of God*, *Acts* 13. 36. And therefore was an eminent blessing to all that Generation wherein he lived. If the sins of the People under your care and charge should ever provoke the Lord, to leave you in an hour of Temptation, you cannot possibly turn aside from God alone, but many others will do so too. *Regis ad Exemplum*, People are apt to follow the Examples of those in place, you know it is mentioned concerning Rehoboam, that he within few years after his coming to the Government did forsake the Lord, and all Israel with him, *2 Chron.* 11. 1. Let me then with all due respect to your places, and to your worth, and yet with that freedom and faithfulness which becometh a Messenger of the

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Lord of Hosts, propound some things to you, which concern the welfare of this, and after Generations in New-England.

1. *I pray you in the Name of the Lord, that a speedy & Effectual Course may be taken, that the great things that God did for our Fathers, in planting these Heavens, and laying the Foundations of this Earth, be faithfully recorded, and transmitted to Posterity.* This hath been thought of, and spoken of long enough, but why is it not done? If it be neglected till the present Generation be passed away, the next will be less capable of doing it. The Title of the Book wherein my Text is, leads me to Insist on this. Why is this Book called the *Chronicles*, but because it contains a *Record* and relation of the things which God did for his People in antient time, yea, from time to time. The Hebrews have termed it, [*di-bre hajamin*] words of dayes probably (as [r] some conceive) taken out of the royal *Diaryes* of those times, by divine direction and Inspiration; this Book of *Chronicles* being an unerring [s] *Epitome* of those *Chronicles* mentioned in the Kings. The Truth is, that above half the old-Testament is a *Chronicle* of things done, by the Lord, for his People in the years of Antient Generations. You have then Scripture Example abundantly to encourage, in promoting a work of this nature. Hence we read of the Book of *Jasher*, 2 Sam. 1. 18. and of the Book of *Nathan* the Prophet, and of *Gad* the Seer, 1 Chron. 29. 29. and of *Abijah*, the Shilonite, and of *Shemaiah* the Prophet, 2 Chron. 12. 15. and the Story of the Prophet *Iddo*, 2 Chron. 13. 22. There is also plain Scripture precept [s] as well as Example to move hereunto, see Psal. 78. 5. 6 *For he established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel which he commanded our Fathers, that they should make them known to their Children, that the Generations to come, might know*

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even the Children which should be born, who should arise, and declare them to their Children. And again, Psal. 102. 18. *This shall be written for the Generations to come.* So that this is a duty incumbent upon present Generations to take care that there be a Record of the great works of God towards them, for the benefit of the Generations that shall follow, that so God may be glorified. I perceive that some good men are afraid lest our too great neglect in this matter, may be one thing that God is offended at. And there be two considerations, which may cause such apprehensions not to seem groundless, one is in that this thing hath been formerly urged, [w] That faithful *Shepard* who spake here in the Name of the Lord upon the like occasion, five years agoe, insisted upon this very thing, and yet the matter remains unfinished to this day. Moreover, whilst the body of the first Generation, whom God planted in this Wilderness was alive, there were Essays this way, for it [t] was propounded to, and concluded amongst the Commissioners of the united Colonies above thirty years agoe, that there should be a Collection of special Providences of God towards his New-England people; And that memorials being duly communicated, an History should be compiled according to Truth, for the benefit of Posterity, that they might see how God had dealt with their Fathers, in laying the Foundation of the Churches, and of the Common-Wealth. Now that such things should be concluded, and yet never done cannot please God. Furthermore, how can we testify to Posterity our gratitude towards God, for the great things he hath done for our Fathers, and for us their Children, in more respects then can be now mentioned, except such a lasting Record and Monument as is now spoken of, be brought to perfection. In the Townhouse at *Genoa*, it is written on Mar-

[w] See
Mr. She-
pards His
Hon. Ser-
mons p. 16
[t] See
Gen. 1. 16
Sept. 9.
An. 1646

x] *Clark's* the Senate and People of Geneva, have erected this Monument, that so they might testify to Posterity their gratitude towards God. Let me then entreat you that are Senators of this Colony, that a work of this nature may not be alwayes delayed; and the rather, because you know not whether your opportunity to encourage such an undertaking, will be of long continuance. And this may (by the blessing of Christ) be one good means to prevent Apostasy. The Lord therefore commanded his People of old, to keep a Record of his works and signal Providences towards them, that so their Children after them might set their hope in God and keep his Commandments, Psal. 78. 7.

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236.

2. I pray you in the Name of the Lord, to take care for the propagation of the Interest of the Gospel, that the good knowledge of the Lord may be amongst the people under your Government in your time; yea, and after that also. If ignorance overspread the Land Apostasy will do so too. Hence David here saith, *know thou the Lord God of thy Father and serve him*, but if thou *forsake him*, &c. intimating, that except succeeding Generations know the Lord, they will not serve him, but forsake him. Therefore it concerns the Magistrate, to take effectual care, that the Land be furnished with able and faithful Ministers; So we read of Jehoshaphat, that he caused Levites to be sent into all the Cities of Judah who taught the People, 2 Chron. 17. 8, 9. And this stands upon Record to his everlasting Renown. It is not every man that is fit to be employed as a pullick Teacher, *Ezra* saith (Chap. 8. 17, 18. that he sent unto such an *Yrch*, that they would bring unto him *Ministers for* *house of God*, and that by the good hand of God *brot*

brought a man of understanding: He that is employed in holy things ought to be such an one. Therefore you should endeavour that the future generation may be furnished with a learned Ministry. [y] Ce
The [y] Writers of ecclesiastical Story, 2.c.7.
inform us, how carefull Christians in the primi- 3.c.7.
tive times were, for the setting of Schools of Learning, in all places where Churches had been planted, that so there might be able instruments raised up for the propagating of truth in succeeding Generations. And some have well and truly observed, that the interest of Religion and good literature, hath [z] .
risen and fallen together. It was Julians policy to Mr
pull down Schools among Christians, that so he ner of
might destroy Religion, [z] concluding that the neces-
cause that should not have an able defendant of bus
would fall. Therefore let there be a pious and learn-
earnest solicitude about that matter. One of the for a
famous Kings † in our nation caused a law to be esta-
blished, that all Parents should bring up their chil-
dren in Learning. I know there are good laws † E
amongst us, respecting inferiour Schools, though I v.Cl
doubt as to execution there is great defect in that as vol. 1
well as in other matters. Let me also beseech you 173.
to endeavour that what concerns the Colledge may be
revived, and if it may be in the place where it hath
formerly flourished, I have nothing to say against that
but much for it rather; & that greater encouragement
be given to those that labour as Tutors there. [a] That
was propounded to this general Assembly four years
agoe, by him that did then so faithfully declare the
counsel of God to this Generation. I would gladly
second a motion of that nature, as supposing that
more of the welfare of the uprising generations is
concerned therein then many are aware of.

I remember it is noted concerning the learned Chy:

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them, that he prevailed with the Princes of *Megapol*
 to bestow 3500 crowns or yearly Revenue, upon the
 Vniverſity of *Keſſock*, by which means the intereſt of
 Religion was wonderfully promoted. And it was
 one of the uſual wiſhes of that excellent man, *Utinam*
Reges ac Potentes rerum Domini, maiorem Eccleſie ac
Scholarum curam ſuſciperent. O (ſaid he) that Magi-
 ſtrates would be more carefull to encourage Schools
 of learning, and thereby promote the good of the
 Church. The Reformers, did in this way, and by this
 means carry on the intereſt of Religion, & propagate
 the Truth to after ages. *Cathin* therefore perſwaded
 the Senate of *Geneva* to erect an illuſtrious School in
 that city wherein the Tongues and Arts were taught;
 and from whence many worthy Inſtruments iſſued
 forth. And that excellent Prince *Caffmir* did the
 like at *Neuſſad*, where *Uſin* and *Zanchi* were ſome-
 times Profeſſors. So the Senate of *Grunberg* erected
 a Colledge, and choſe the learned *Buckolzer* to go-
 vern it. The like was done at *Herborn* by Prince
John of Naſſau at the perſwaſion of *Oleſtan*, where al-
 ſo *Piſcator* taught and flouriſhed: So at *Leiden*
 in Holland. And (not to mention more places) the
 ſame courſe was taken at *Edinburgh* in Scotland: of
 which Colledge that famous and holy man, Mr. *Kil-
 lock* was the firſt preſident, and many choice Inſtre-
 ments of Gods glory have there been educated.
 Wherefore let what concerns this matter, be amongſt
 the chief of your cares and endeavours.

Further, I entreat you, let it be your care, that none
 but faithfull ones (as far as men can judge) be em-
 ployed as publick Preachers: Though the juſt liber-
 ties of Churches ſhould not be infringed, yet that
 every Plantation in the Country ſhould have allow-
 ance to chuſe, whom they pleaſe to labour in the
 publick diſpenſation of the word, may be in time a

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great inlet to ignorance, error and profaness. Therefore let me humbly propound to you, that you would think of some expedient, respecting the approbation of such, as shall be under a constant improvement as publick Teachers. Yea, and that there be not any place settled without such. No doubt but one reason why the Lord hath let loose the Heathen against us, hath been, because some Plantations have been erected, and yet no publick acknowledgement of God amongst them, but they have lived like Heathen, without Sabbaths, without the word and Prayer, which are moral duties that all are bound to attend: and it is therefore incumbent on the Magistrates to see that they do so. People are ready to run wild into the woods again, and to be as heathenish as ever, if you doe not prevent it. Take care also I beseech you, for the propagation of the Gospel amongst these poor Indians. You know it is expressed in the *Patent*, as one main end propos'd by our Fathers in their coming into this Wilderness, that so they might endeavour the Conversion of the Natives, and set up the Kingdome of the Lord Jesus amongst them. God by the late War hath made way for the Gospel to be entertained amongst them, more then formerly; should not this be considered!

3. *I beseech you in the Name of the Lord, that you would in special manner beware of that which was the sin of Solomon: and what was that? Truly sinfull Toleration was Solomons great iniquity, whereby he did forsake the Lord. It is said of him, he built high places for Ahtaroth, 2 King. 23. 13. because he did tolerate and give publick allowance, unto those Idols: and that sin of his was the reason why the Lord stirred up Adversaries against him. Doe we not find that all the godly reforming Magistrates, taken of in the Scripture, thought it their concern*

to pull down false worship, as well as to set up the true worship of God. It is a most vain objection which some have made, that we doe not read in the New Testament, that the Magistrate did ever punish any, on account of Transgression against the first Table. No more (saith *Calvin*) doe we read in the New Testament, that the Magistrate did ever punish men for murder, or other crimes, doth it therefore follow that he ought not so to doe? But therein it is said that they ought to punish all evill doers. Rom. 13.4. 1. Tim. 1.9. And that Transgressions against the first Table are evill deeds, Gal. 5.19.20. Phil. 3.2.2. Joh. 10.11. And the holy Apostle wished those false Teachers, who disturbed the peace of the Churches in Galatia cut off. Gal. 5.12. Some judicious Authors conceive [b] that he wilheth there had been a christian Magistrate in the world to take such a course with those seducing spirits as they deserved. Moreover, sinfull Toleration is an evil of exceeding dangerous consequence. Men of corrupt minds, though they may plead for Toleration, and cry up liberty of Conscience, &c. yet if once they should become numerous, and get power into their hands, none would persecute more than they: So the Donatists [c] of old, and the Germane Anabaptists [*] in the last age. And the *Arminian Remonstrants* [d] in the Netherlands made hideous clamours for liberty of Conscience, and that the States of Holland were more cruel than the bloody Spanish Inquisitors, yet when they became potent, they did persecute the Orthodox Professors of the Truth. And indeed the Toleration of all Religions and Perswasions, is the way to have no true Religion at all left. That was *Julian* the Apostate his device, in order to an extirpation of Christianity. And it is a solemn word which Mr. *Cotton* (the first and famous Teacher in this Congregation) speak

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speareth, [d] *I wish* (saith he) *that Antichrist doe not creep in at the back door of Toleration.* I doe believe that Antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his Kingdome of Darknes, then by a *Toleration* of all Religions and Perswasions. Hence some of the chief of the Popish Doctors [e] have written against the Magistrates power in matters of Religion. But remember I pray you, how God hath punished this sin which I am testifying against. Of old (as some [f] have truly observed) when once the Romane Emperours did indulge and tolerate *Arrians*, God was provoked to let the barbarous *Goths* loose to break in upon the Empire and destroy it, so as that the Church fled into the wilderness, had like to have been swept away with that flood. And what misery this sin hath more then once brought upon our own Land and Nation, I need tel you. It is a very memorable passage, which I find related in the life of that great learned *Usher*; when Popish Idolaters were by the Civil State allowed, Well (said that Worthy of his time) you shall find that God will punish you forty years hence by those very men, whom you have sinfully indulged: and so it came to pass; for just forty years after that was the Irish Rebellion. This very sin which God calleth me to bear witness against this day, hath been so injurious to the interest of Religion in some Christian Nations. The Toleration of *Socinianisme* hath brought the ruin of the Churches in *Poland* and *Transylvania*. Yet it is far from my design in speaking of this, to stir up Magistrates to that which the Scripture calleth *Persecution*: it were better to erre by too much

d. *Mr. Cottons bloud Tenuis washed.* p. 19.
e. *Sic Becanus, Mariana, Harding contra Fellum. Hari in Raimodum. Sic Bozzius et Resens, quos vide citat apud Keckerm. in pol* p. 983. *et Patrum Rom.* 13.

f. *Mr. Strong Sel Sermons.* p. 263. 264.

re *Sr. Simond D'Ewrs*
s Primitive Prallice
r preserving Truth.
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indulgence towards those that have the root of the matter in them, than by too much severity. Nay, as to those that are indeed Heretical, I can for my own part say with Luther, *Ad judicium sanguinis tardus sum*, I have no affection to sanguinary punishments in such cases. And certainly there are other wayes to suppress Hereticks besides *Hereticis*, witness what was done by great

Constantine for the suppression of *Arriani*me. Nevertheless, approved writers who are large enough in the point of *Toleration*, declare, that they, the principles of whose Religion are disturbant, to the civil State and Constitution of any place, may not be indulged, (and that therefore Popish Priests and Jesuits are not to be permitted.) Sure then they whose Religion, and whose Profession doth warm in its bowels, a fatal Engine, against the Kingdome and Churches of the Lord Jesus, ought not to be tolerated. Nor is it tolerable, for any sort of men amongst us, to set up a Mount *Gerizim*, that if these, or those are *justly* cast out of the Churches of Christ, they shall be suffered to set up an Altar against the Lords Altar, and (it may be) to take those hands that are in the Name of the Lord Jesus delivered up to Satan, I say, to take those hands to administer [4] the *deadly* *miserics* of the Kingdome, it is an abomination enough to make desolate. Certainly (much honoured in the Lord) if your blessed Fathers, and Predecessors were alive, and in place, it would not be so; If *Winstrop*, [4] *Dudley*, *Endicot* were upon the Bench such profaneness as this would soon be suppressed. And if it be so, that the Spirit of Rulers in New-England is changed, if you do become cold and indifferent in the things of God, departing from your former love, and zeal for the Name, Truth, and

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bleſſed Ordinances of the Lord Jeſus, I will be bold to ſpeak to you, as once Mr. *Brightman* ſaid, to a greater man then any of you all, *if it be ſo*, you may believe it, that God will *change* either you, or your Government *ere long*. I ſpeak it to you with great ſolemnity of Spirit, and in the Name of him that is higher then the higheſt.

4. *Labour* (*I like wiſe pray you in the Name of the Lord*) *to the utmoſt of your power, that the work of Reformation may be promoted in this Generation.*

I ſhall not need to inſiſt here, becauſe this Argument was abundantly and worthily enlarged on [g] by him that ſpoke in the Name of the Lord on this occaſion three years agoe. Since that, the holy diſpenſations of God towards this People have been very dreadful, ſo that the Lord calls for Reformation, now more then ever. If things ſhould paſſ away thus, and the Generation that is to come ſhould not ſee, that ſome notable thing was done with reſpect to a Reformation of provoking evils, it would be ſad indeed; and the more ſad, in that there have been *Effays* this way, and ſince the late (and to this day not fully ended) *War*, a Committee appointed by the general Court to enquire into the cauſes of the high diſpleaſure of God, which hath been manifeſted, and ſuch and ſuch evils, concluded to be matters of provocation, and Laws enacted for the ſuppreſſion of them. & ſhall it all come to juſt nothing at laſt? ſhall we dare to dally with the Almighty in things of this nature? The Lord may reſpite us for a while, but except there be a Reformation of provoking evils, we have no Reaſon to expect otherwiſe, but that a *woſe thing will* *uſue* us, & that he will puniſh us yet ſeven times for ſins. And how is there like to be that Reformation which the Lord requireth, except you that Leaders over this People, do your utmoſt to pro-

[g] *Mr.*
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note it? where do you read of any great and general Reformation brought to pass, except the civil Magistrate did forward it? It is true, that many times God doth make use of his Messengers and Ministers to set the Wheel a going, but then Magistrates have fallen in with them. The Prophets *Haggai and Zachary* set the work of Reformation upon the Wheel, but *Zerubbabel and Shealtiel* (godly Magistrates) carryed on the work to Effect, *Ezra 5. 1, 2.* *Luther* began the Reformation in Germany, yet if some of the Princes there, had not engaged with him, the work had never been carryed on with such success. *Calvin* (and other eminent Ministers of God) exhorted the People at *Geneva*, unto Reformation, but if the Senators of that place had not hearkened to the voice of God in those Exhortations, the People would have remained unreformed still. *Zwinglius* by his Ministry was instrumental towards the accomplishing a great Reformation in *Zurick*, but then the Magistrates of that place fell in with the Word of God. *Oecolampadius* was an happy Instrument in the hand of Christ to reform *Basil*; but if the Magistrates of that City had not set to their helping hand, *Oecolampadius* alone might have laboured in vain. The like is to be said concerning the Reformation of *Bern*, (not to insist on more Instances) where that learned *Hallerus* was once a preacher of the Gospel. I know you cannot change mens hearts, yet you may do much (if God help you) towards the effecting an outward Reformation, which will procure outward blessings and prevent outward Judgements and desolations. There is pride in the hearts of men, you cannot reform that, but there is pride in Apparel which the Lord hath said he will punish for, you may cause that to be reformed. There is drunkenness in the sight of God, which doth not fall under your Cognizance, but

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Drunkennes in the sight of men, and the occasions of it, do; which you may and ought to remove. I know not any evil, that hath brought more misery upon this generation then that hath, and some that have Reason to know it, have told me that there hath been more Drunkennes amongst the Indians, since this war, then there was before; undoubtedly there is a fault somewhere, that good Laws are not executed upon those that shall transgress in this kind, and that the course propounded and enacted by the general Court, for the suppressing of this growing evil hath not been duly attended. Again, as for scandalous Contentions, you may do much towards the healing of them. All the world knoweth, that there hath been an unhappy breach between two of the Churches in this great Town. If every one of you that are in place, shall do what you can, and what the Lord Jesus would have you do, to help in this case, we may hope that woful breach will (by the help of Christ) soon be healed, and much sin and Judgement that is, otherwise like to follow, will be prevented. And the Lord calls aloud about this matter; The burning which he hath kindled in this place, the voice of the Lord in it is, *out with your sinful fires, lest I give you burning for burning.* And since that, this Town hath been endangered more by fire then ever it was since the day I knew it. Therefore I come to you in the Name of the Lord, and beseech you to consider of this matter, lest the Lord kindle another fire in Boston ere long, that shall burn to the Foundation of the Mountains. And I do the rather mention this thing, because the Subject I am upon, leads me to it, the welfare of Posterity being concerned therein, it may be the sowre grapes which the Fathers have eaten [b] *Mr.* will set your Childrens teeth on edge, I [b] remember *Burro* ber blessed Mr. Burroughs in his *Ironium* taketh no *for*

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tice of it, that it is *very dangerous* for the Children of the Church to be brought up in the sight of Divisions amongst Professors. Was there not a young man that came to a lamentable end in this Country, [4] who professed that the Divisions which he observed amongst godly men, had occasioned his ruine? Let us remember that Scripture, Jer. 32. 39. I will give them *one heart* to fear me, *for the good* of them, *and of their Children after them*. If there be a divided heart among Christians, and these Divisions appear openly; it is a wrong to their Children after them. The Lord help us to consider of it.

And now I shall turn my speech from you that are *Zerubbabels* amongst this People: I doubt not but you consider that I have spoken these things, not as a friend only, but as in the Capacity of an unworthy Ambassador of the most high God unto you this day. And methinks my Conscience bears me witness in the holy Ghost, that an earnest desire that the will of God might be done, hath caused me thus to express my self; As also a desire that you might have comfort both now and in *that day* when you must give up your account to the Son of God, concerning your Stewardship, which in his Providence he hath entrusted you with; and that your names might be honourably spoken of in the next Generation, when you shall be in your graves. It is no honour to *Jehu's name* that *in his dayes* God began to cut *Israel short*, 2 King. 10. 32. nor to *Jehoram* in that it is recorded to Posterity, *that in his dayes the Edomites revolted*, 2 Chron. 21. 18. Nor will it be for your honour, if the next Generation shall say, once such and such Worthies and Patriots had the management of affairs in *New-England*; and in their dayes things went well, God did bless a build, and prosper the Land, but after they were

gone, the work fell into other hands, and *in their* days there was trouble upon trouble, wars, sicknesses, Sword, Fire, desolations in every corner of the Land, for it (thus to be spoken) would not be for your honour. But now that it should be said, though the Lord afflicted the Land for a while, you caused the People under your charge to turn unto the Lord, & then God did own them, and bleſs them more then ever, this will be to your honour amongst men in this world, and more to your joy when you shall appear before Jesus Christ, then if Crowns of Diadems should be set upon your heads. The Lord grant it may be so.

2. Let me humbly propose this Exhortation to those that are Ministers in the house of God. There are many such before the Lord in this great Assembly. My Fathers, and Brethren, the Generation that is present, and that which is to come, will bleſs God for us, if we do our utmost to promote their welfare; We are many of us eminently *the Children of the Prophets*. The Prophets do they live for ever; and our Fathers where are they? they are now in Heaven be- holding the glory of Jesus Christ; And the Lord Jesus who sometimes said to the Angels of the Churches, *I know your works*, speaketh to us saying, the great affairs of my Kingdome, which once were in the hands of your Fathers to manage, are now come into your hands, they were faithful to my Name, and did acquit themselves as became them, now let me see what you will do: Follow them as they followed Christ. Give me leave to mention two or three words, which if the Lord help us to remember them; we shall serve our Generation according to the will of God.

I. *Let us approve our selves faithful in what concerns the house of God.* And therefore we ought to be care-

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ful, who are admitted there. Though others are also concerned therein, yet in a more peculiar manner, *that matter belongs to us.* We are in respect of sacred Office relation before the Lord, Porters that have the charge of his house; & we are solemnly charged, *Ez. k. 44. 7.* (it is a Scripture that concerns Ministers of the New-Testament) not to bring into the Lords Sanctuary, uncircumcised in heart, to be in the Sanctuary to pollute it, and to eat the bread of God there. Indeed as for those whom God hath admitted into his house (in any degree) by any rule of his, we must not turn them out till the Lord do it. But that which I intend, is the admission of persons into full Communion, we know what our Fathers have taught concerning that matter, *viz.* that there ought to be an holding forth Faith and Repentance before admission to the Lords Table. And it is well said by blessed Mr. *Mitchel* [1] that laxness in that point, would be a real departure from our former Profession; yet I wish there be not Teachers found in our Israel, that have espoused loose, large Principles here, desiring to bring all persons to the Lords Supper, who have an Historical Faith, and are not scandalous in life, although they never had Experience of a work of Regeneration on their Souls, and live in the neglect of secret duties, wherein the life and power of godliness especially consists. Now this would corrupt Churches, and ruine all in a little time, The neglect [2] of this principle of Truth, that such members of the Church, as are admitted to full Communion ought to be Regenerate, converted persons, the non attendance unto that did (as a worthy Divine of our own hath well noted) lay the Foundation to great Apostasy, which the Christian Church hath been long subject unto. Again, if we would be faithful as to what concerns the House of God, we must endeavour

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deavour that the building thereof be carried on to perfection: As David in this Context speaks to Solomon, *Take heed now, for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for a Sanctuary, be strong and doe it.* So hath the Lord been pleased to chuse us to be employed in building his house, which hath not been carried on to the desired perfection. Our Fathers did like David, He prepared Materials for the Temple, and then left it to his Son to goe on with the Building: So did our Fathers, leave us Principles of Truth, which they did with much cost and pains, dig out of the rich veins of the Scripture. We have need therefore to be much in Prayer, and Humiliations before the Lord, that so he might vouchsafe to shew us the form of the House, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof.

2. *Let us make Converting work our main Design.* Shall we be content to goe to heaven alone, and not strive to carry as many of the Generation we live in, along with us as possibly we can? Alas Apostacy will prevail, and these Churches cannot be kept pure long, except converting work goe forward. O therefore let us preach for this, and pray for this, & study for this, that precious immortal Souls may be converted to God through Jesus Christ. And to this end it will be good for us to attend personal instruction of those under our charge, as far time as & strength will permit us. I remember it is noted in the lives of *Calvin*, *Chrysostom* and *Austin*, that besides their publick Labours, they did sometimes attend personal Instruction of these and those of their hearers. When the Ministers in *Geneva* did agree to divide the City, so as to call each Family to an account concerning their Faith: more good was done thereby then by all their publick Teachings. And some of latter time have

* *Refertur in A*
* *Calvin*
* *Chrysostom*
* *Austin*
* *Baxters Preface*
* *Ames C. Conf.*
c. 2^a

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been blessed with eminent success, as to the Conversion of Souls, so as that whole Towns where they have lived have been wonderfully changed, upon taking this course. I know that where there is but one Elder in a Church (as alas that is now the case of these Churches generally) so much cannot be done that way as is to be desired; yet if we doe as much as we can, the Lord Jesus will accept of it; and it may be, success will be beyond expectation. Many an one that minds not a Sermon, yet when he is by a Messenger of God particularly spoken to, and told, you are yet in your sins: if you be not new born, better you had never been born; he falls down under conviction. And possibly words that we little think any such thing of now, will be mentioned again to our exceeding joy and rejoycing in the day of Christ when we shall see and hear many Souls stand forth and bless the Lord Jesus that ever they knew us, & that ever we s^ak to them in the Name of the Lord both publickly and privately; even in the day when each of us that hath been faithfull in his Generation, shall say, *Lord here am I, and the Children that thou hast given me.* Moreover, if we would convert Souls, and be blessings indeed to this Generation, it concerns us to be very careful of our personal Conversation, & what examples we set

See Dr. Tuckney on Exod. 36. P. 429. And Fuller, by State, p. 268. And Green-in Ezek. 42. p. 334. And Dury in his Discourse on a Question, how far a Minister of the Gospel may ingage self in civil affairs.

before others. If we doe not live Sermons as well as preach them, we are not likely to doe any great good. For a Minister of Christ [m] to be a Merchant, and entangle himself with the affairs of this life, against the expresse charge of the Holy-Ghost; or for them to be Gos-

pel Lawyers, to handle the *Toll* instead of the *Bible*

and study the Statutes of the Land, instead of the Statutes of Heaven; for them to appear as Advocates, and plead Causes in civil Courts of Judicature, it is very uncomely. One of the Ancients observeth, *Jerom.* that *Sacerdos in Foro, et Mercator in Templo* is not to be tolerated. Certainly such Preachers are not likely to be instruments of turning many to Righteousness. Much more doe they hinder the Conversion of Souls, that shall call themselves Ministers of Christ, and yet be of a scandalous Conversation. When the Prophets of Jerusalem are light Persons, Profaneness goeth forth into all the Land. I have read somewhere of one that was grievously tempted to Atheism on this account: For (said that poor creature) I live under a Minister that will preach good Sermons, but his conversation is not according thereunto, he will be drunk sometimes, and secretly vile and lascivious, and therefore how can I believe that there is any God or Devil, or heaven or hell, or any such thing? An evill Example in such an one, is enough to make those of the Generation amongst whom he liveth to become Atheists.

3. *Ob! that our occasional Meetings might be improved for the good of this, and after Generations.* Because of the capacity and holy Relation we stand in before the Lord, it is expected we should not be like other men, they may meet together, and spend that time in discourses of their own personal concerns; but we have the care and charge of Souls committed to us. Yea (in our measure) the care of all the Churches ought to be upon us: nay, more, we must be solicitous for those that shall come after us. Such a publick spirit well becometh our publick capacity, & therefore upon all occasions to speak and act accordingly. And verily, the Lord will write down these discourses in his book of Remembrance, and we

shall be glad to hear of them again *at that day*, we must every one of us, (Ministers as well as People) appear in a greater Congregation than this, and then we shall not be sorry, that we have laid our selves out for God & for his People; yea, the more we have done for Christ, and for the Generation wherein we live, the greater will our glory be, when we shall hear the Lord Jesus saying, Well done thou faithfull Servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. If the Lord help us to approve our selves faithfull unto the Death, when he the chief Shepherd shall appear, he will give unto us a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away.

Let me in the last place, direct my speech and Exhortation in the Name of the Lord, unto the people of this Land. There are here present those that are *Deputed* to act in the name and stead of the people of this Jurisdiction. You have a great opportunity put into your hands by the providence of God, to doe service for this and after Generations, *viz.* by endeavouring the establishment of righteous and religious Laws in the Common-wealth, that so the Lord Jesus might reign there. Especially, let me propound to you, that you would take some effectual course, that good Laws which are already established, may be duly executed; And that some further care might be taken for the suppressing of that wickedness that is usually committed the night after the Sabbath, God hath lately kindled a fire in this place, and it was the night after the Sabbath, why should we wonder at it? I cannot speak it without some anguish of Spirit, there is more wickedness committed usually that night then in all the week besides. Therefore I think of some expedient to help in this case, I will also mention another thing to you; I have forme

ly upon a solemn occasion mentioned it to the Honoured Magi tracy, and therefore now apply me self to you; it is this, that you would recommend unto the Churches in this Colony a solemn renewal of their Covenant with God and one another. That is a great Scripture expedient for Reformation. Do not think that this is any new notion, but it is a known Principle owned and avowed by [o] the good old non-Conformists, (whose Children we are) *That renewal of Covenant is the way to attain Church Reformation*, which Principle was much improved by the chief of the Fathers, of these New-English Churches, (and therefore I the rather insit upon it) this is the way to prevent Apostasy. The Covenant was renewed in the dayes of Joshua, when as the Scripture testifyeth, that in his dayes the Children of Israel continued to serve the Lord, wherefore Divines observe, that Joshuahs special designe in putting the People upon renewing their Covenant, was that so they might be kept from future Apostasy. I do therefore in the Name of the Lord, commend this matter to you, and leave it with you, and God incline your hearts to do that which shall be pleasing in his sight. And if the Lord intend not further shakings and desolations amongst these Churches, I am perswaded that this motion will be hearkned unto, and complied with. Moreover, there are many others of the People of the Land here, before the Lord this day, a considerable part of the present Generation is met together in this Assembly; a few words let me speak to you, and with you, that so you may not forsake the Lord, God of your Fathers.

[o] *Cartwright, Parker, Ames, &c*

Let us labour to be rightly informed respecting Principles which our Fathers owned. There are mistakes in the minds of some, who think that the Fathers of this Colony, affirmed thus and so, albeit, it was far from

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from them, so to teach, or so to think, I shall not (being now in earnest, and desirous to speak with utmost solemnity) enter upon things which are more Controversial amongst us, but certain it is, that our Fathers alwayes owned and avowed this Principle of Truth, *that nothing should be admitted into the worship of God but what there is Scripture warrant for, nor anything neglected which the Lord hath instituted.* The cause of the second Commandment was that which our Fathers were engaged in the defence of. And as to Church Administrations, *that things should be reduced to the Primitive, Apostolical pattern.* An excellent principle, albeit, that blessed Martyr, Mr. *Laurence Saunders* was accused of Heresy for asserting it. And I remember that great learned man and blessed Martyr *Peter Ramus*, professeth in one of his Epistles, that the deep consideration of this Principle, [p] *that the Apostolical Age was the golden Age of the Church, and that things should be regulated according to what was then practised in the Churches of Christ,* caused him to become a Protestant; yea, and for the Congregational way of Church Government. And indeed the Congregational way truly stated, is that which our Fathers have stedfastly owned and avowed, that is to say, as it is held forth in the platform of Discipline, and by Mr. *Cotton* in his Book of the Keyes; they were not for Presbyterianisme, nor yet for Brownisme. Remember blessed Mr. *Norton's* last words, in this place and under this Roof.

2. *Keep up the power of Discipline in Churches.* When Apostasy prevailed, in the Asiatick Churches there was the original wound. They did not brandish the Sword of Discipline, which is Christs own expedient, and appointment, for the preservation of Churches in purity; yea, this was a fatal neglect, which by degrees proved ruinous to those once fa-

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mous and glorious Churches. Some learned men [q] have well observed, that the neglect of Discipline in the Churches of Asia brought in corruption of manners, and corruption of manners was (through the just revenging hand of God) attended with corruption of Doctrine, and these together provoked the Lord, to lay those Churches most desolate. And as for the Children of the Covenant let Discipline be extended towards them, according as they are Subjects capable thereof. Did not our Fathers come hither in hope that they should leave their Children, under the Discipline and Government of the Lord Jesus in his Church? Hath not Christ owned the application of solemn publick Admonitions, &c. to some of them that have been Children of the Church, (though not in full Communion) even so as to convert their Souls thereby? why then should disputes about the mode wholly evacuate the thing, when so much of the welfare of Souls, and the Interest of Christs Kingdome is concerned therein

[q] *Poet-
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bi inter
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ones.*

3. *Look to your Families.* Families are the Nurseries for Church and Common-wealth, ruine Families, and ruine all. Order them well and the publick State will fare the better; the great wound and misery of *New-England* is that Families are out of Order. As to the generality of householders, Family Government is lost, & gone; Servants do not fear their Masters, Children do not honour their Parents, in respect the *English* are become like unto the *He-
brewees*. Let Christians make conscience of it as their duty, to rule their own houses well, and be careful Family Instruction be upheld; the Judgements God should awaken to this. In some Families Children have no Father left to instruct them, in other Families Fathers have no Children left to be instructed by them, by these terrible Judgements

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they that have Families, should learn to be diligent in Instructing of them, whilst they have an opportunity so to do; And this is the way to prevent Apostasy, for ignorance is the mother (not of devotion but) of Heresy. Vsuallly, they that prove Hereticks, are such as were never well grounded in the knowledge of Principles, never well instructed in Catechetical Fundamental Doctrines and points of Religion. The
 [Real Waldenses [r] preserved and propagated the Interest
 of Religion by diligence, in catechising their Chil-
 dren. When certain Jesuits were sent amongst
 them to entice them from the Truth to Idolatry,
 they returned amazed, professing that Children of
 seven years old amongst those Waldenses knew more
 in the Scripture, and of the Mysteries of the Gospel,
 then many of their learned Doctors did. Take heed al-
 so how you dispose of your Children, you that are
 Parents look at Religion and the fear of God, in dis-
 posing of your Children. That blessed man Mr. Dod
 (the Moses of his time) would sometimes bewail it,
 that Professors of Religion would say, *there is a portion
 & Civility, & we will hope for grace; but* (said he) *rather
 make sure of grace, and hope for riches, there is far greater
 Reason for it, since Godliness bath the Promises, riches have
 none.* It may make us dread to think what's coming,
 in that it is with us, as it was with the old world, the
 Sons of God are marrying with the daughters of men.
 Church members in disposing of their Children look
 more at portion then at piety. If their Children are
 like to live well in the world, and their Families to
 be made richer, they look no further; a sad sign that
 Religion will expire, and such Families be cut off
 from the Covenant, within a few Generations, and
 the branches thereof perish for ever.

4. Pray with all manner of prayer and supplication in
 the Spirit. Pray as Sometimes the Martyr did, Lord
 do

Rising Generation.

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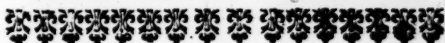
do not thou forsake me, lest I forsake thee. Pray for your poor Children and Posterity, as David did for his Son Solomon, 1 Chron. 29. 19. *give unto my Son Solomon a perfect heart.* He did not only exhort & charge his Son to labour after such an heart, but earnestly prayed to God, that such an heart might be given to him. And truly, if there were more prayers poured forth before the Lord, for the conversion of *the Rising Generation*, we may hope that there would a blessed Effect follow. I have been told that there is a Church in *New-England*, that hath set dayes apart only to seek unto the Lord, for converting grace to be vouchsafed to their children. O that all other Churches would do as they have done, even seek unto the Lord by Fasting and Prayer, for a poor, perishing, dying, unconverted Generation.

5. Lastly, *Be faithful in improving of your Civil Liberties.* Beware of two extreams, of an *Isacharian Spirit*, to couch under every Imposer: if you foolishly lose your Libertyes, your Posterity, yea, the children that are yet to be born will rue it. Beware also of a *wanton Spirit*, lest you provoke the Lord, by bitter bondage to make you know the worth of Liberty. It is a great priviledge which you enjoy this day, that you may chuse Rulers from amongst your selves. And although as to what concerns the Transactions of this day, it is almost too late to speak, yet you may *hear for the time to come.* Freemen remember the Oath of God that is upon you. I doubt there is lamentable sin upon many, who in *Elections* are acted more by rest and Faction, then by Conscience. You know the Rule is, *viz.* that you should chuse men that just and that fear God, and that late Covetous. Chuse men that shall approve themselves Eliakim) Fathers to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, chuse men of Hezekiahs Spirit, who *speak com-*

fortably to all those that taught the good knowledge of the Lord. In a word, chuse those that will be zealous for the Interest of Reformation, and that therefore will improve their power, to suppress transgressions of the first, as well as of the second Table. If you will chuse such (which mercy forbid that ever it should be) under whose shadow thorns and bryars shall thrive, and those weeds of pride, contention, Heresy shall receive nourishment, and encouragement; It will be an ominous sign, that God will ere long, deprive you of your Liberties, until such time as you know better how to improve them. And now I hope I may say, that as to the opportunity put into my hands, this day, I have discharged my Conscience, delivered my Soul, and can lay down my head with peace. I conclude with *Moses*, calling Heaven and Earth to Record, that life and death hath been set before this Generation. O Generation see the Word of the Lord, chuse life, that both thou and thy Seed may live. And God from Heaven saith, O that there were such an heart in this Generation that they would fear me, that so it may go well with them, and with their Children for ever, *Amen!*

Tibi Domine:

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ECCLES. XII. I.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth.

Solomon in this Context doth apply himself to speak unto Young men, whom he doth, 1. Dehort. 2. Exhort.

His Dehortation is in the two last verses of the former Chapter. And it is 1. Ironically propounded, v. 9. *Rejoyce oh young man in thy Youth, &c.* It is such another form of speech as that of [a] *Can* the Prophet unto Ahab, 1 King. 22. 15. *Goe and prosper.* [a] He saw that Ahab was set upon his design, & *Eccle. 1* therefore by way of *Irony* bids him goe, and see what would come of it. Thus Solomon here, I see Young

man (saith he) that thou art resolved to follow thy pleasures and vanities, whatever the event shall be, Doe so, and see what will come of it. Wherefore he addeth, *Walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.* This is expressly forbidden elsewhere in the Scripture [b] A cleer evidence that the wife [b] *See* here speaketh by way of holy derision, & thence *cer in 4* rather added, *Know thou that for these things God* *know.*

bring thee to judgement. q. d. Though its possible mayest escape judgement from men, parents, rates, &c. yet not from the Lord. 2. This cation is plainly exprest in the Verse immediately preceding this Text. *Remove sorrow from thy* The Hebrew word translated sorrow, signifi- ger : q. d. Beware of inordinate passions which
young

young men are usually subject unto : *And put away evil from thy flesh*, h. e. avoid sinfull pleasures. Passions and sinfull pleasures are evils which young men are most in danger of being carried away by; therefore he doth in special caution them against iniquities of that nature : withall adding this Reason, *for childhood and youth are vanity*. h. e. its soon gone, Thy time (young man !) to enjoy sinfull and foolith pleasures will soon be past and gone, it abideth not, therefore set not thy heart upon such things.

2. We have Solomons *Exhortation* unto young men in this verse. Wherein is expressed, 1. The act that ought to be done, *Remember*. 2. The Object, *thy Creator*, i. e. God, for he and he only is the Creator : since it requireth an infinite power to be able to produce a work of Creation, Hebr. [*Boreeca.*] *Thy Creators*. Not that there are more Gods or more Creators then one; But there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead. Though the work of Creation be more especially ascribed to the Father, as Redemption to the Son, and Application to the Spirit, yet each of the persons in the sacred and eternal Trinity, doth concur therein.

3. The time or season, when this duty ought to be attended, is expressed, viz. *now in the dayes of thy youth*. not that they that are past the dayes of their youth may forget God, or be exempted from this remembrance of him, but young men are under special obligations and advantages to remember him.

Doctr. That as it is the Duty of all, so more especially of young men, to remember God their Creator. Remembring God may not be deferred untill old Age, but ought to be attended in the dayes of youth.

In the Doctrinal prosecution of this Truth, there are three things to be enquired into. 1. What is im-

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plied in this Remembring? 2. How it doth appear that young men ought to remember God? 3. The Reason why they especially should doe so?

What is required in this Remembring which the Text Quest. 1 speaks of?

It is a known Rule, that in the Scripture words of Sense doe imply the affections and actions. So here, it is not every kind of Remembrance of God, but that which is affectionate and practical that is intended. Particularly,

1. *This Remembring doth imply a Turning to the Lord, Psal. 22. 27. All the ends of the World shall remember, and Turn to the Lord.* Unfeigned Repentance is implied in this Remembrance. Rev. 2. 5. *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and Repent.* Ezek. 6. 9. *They that escape of you shall Remember me among the Nations.* h.e. They shall Repent and turn unto the Lord. And it is a penitential Remembrance which Solomon here speaketh of. Remember thy Creator, that is, Remember to make thy peace with him, and therefore to Repent of Sin, and turn to God in the dayes of thy Youth.

2. This Remembrance which the Text speaketh of, doth imply Service and Obedience. Psal. 119. 55. *I have remembered thy name, and have kept thy law.* As they that neglect the worship and Service which they owe to the blessed God, are said to forget him, Psal. 9. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* That is to say, they that doe not serve God. When the Children of Israel had forsaken the wayes, and corrupted the worship of God, it was said, *Israel hath forgotten his Maker.* Hos. 8. 14. So on the other hand, the Service of God is noted by that of Remembring him. Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth, h.e. Seek and serve him betimes. As David exhorted his Son Solomon

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lomon, whilst yet in his Youth, 1.Chron.28.9. *Know, and serve the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind.* Hence the Performance of all religious duties, especially that great duty of Prayer, is implied in this Remembling which the Text speaketh of. Jon.2.7. *I Remembred the Lord* (saith the Prophet) and how was that? it followeth, *my Prayer came unto thee, into thine holy Temple.* We read in the Gospel of Children that prayed unto the Lord, they said *Hosanna*, i.e. Save now we beseech thee. Math. 21. 15. That is implied in Remembling God the Creator,

3. It doth also imply frequent thoughts and Meditations of God, Psal.63.6. *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* Where there is that Remembrance of God which the Text requireth, there are frequent holy Meditations on him day and night. As Solomon exhorts, Prov.23. 17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* Set God before thine eyes; wherever thou comest think of him, from morning unto night, ever and anon, let there be awfull holy thoughts in thy heart concerning the Omnipresence of God. And this is to Remember him. We come therefore to the second thing to be enquired into, viz.

Quest. 2. *How it doth appear that Young men ought to remember God?*

Ans. 1. The Lord doth require this, the commandment saith expressly. Luk.10.27. *Thou shalt love Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and all thy strength.* If men are bound to serve God with their strength, then they must not forget him, when those daves are come wherein their strength is given and they able to doe him little service. Of old, it was required that the first born and the first fruits should be given to him. Exod.22.29. *Thou shalt not del*

Rising Generation.

offer the first of thy ripe fruit, the first born shalt thou give unto me. This did intimate that men ought to give the prime of their Age, the first and best of their strength unto the Lord.

2. The Truth of this Doctrine is evident, in that Parents are bound to teach their Children the fear of the Lord whilst they are young, Deut. 6. 6, 7. *The words which I command thee, thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* Again, it is said, *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it,* Prov. 22. 6. To the same purpose is that of the Apostle, Eph. 6. 4: *Ye Fathers bring up your Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* And according unto this hath been the practice of Saints. The Lord himself doth testify concerning Abraham, that he would *command his Children to keep the wayes of the Lord,* Gen. 18. 19. And Solomon doth acknowledge that his Father David was careful to instruct him, and put him in mind of God, whilst he was yet in the dayes of his Youth, Prov. 4. 3, 4. *I was my Fathers Son, he taught me, and said unto me, let thine heart retain my words.* Yea, not only his Father, but his Mother also taught him the fear of the Lord, Prov. 31. 1, 2. *The words of King Lemuel, the Prophecy that his Mother taught him, what my Son! and what the Son in my womb! and what the Son of my vows!* Now to end were it, to teach Children and young ones the Lord, if they were not bound to learn accordingly.

Young men as well as others owe service unto Him. He is their Creator as the Text expresseth. *that one consideration hath great weight in it, force duty and obedience.* For certainly, all service unto him, from whom they have received their Beings, Psal. 95. 6. *O come let us worship and adore, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* He

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hath made all for himself : from him and for him are all things. He as Creator hath given unto men reasonable Souls, in respect whereof, they are capable of knowing and serving the Lord : and he is able to destroy them : He that made them can destroy them : as it is said concerning that creature, *He that made him, can cause his sword to approach unto him,* Job 40.19 Therefore it concerns men to fear their Creator.

But to proceed to the third Particular, namely,

Quest. 3. *Why Young men especially ought to remember their Creator ?*

Ans.

Case. 1.

For these amongst other Reasons,

Because youth is the fittest season to remember God in, wherefore it is added in the Context, *before the evil dayes come, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them.* Old age is an evil time : and therefore (saith the wise man) thou must Remember and serve God in thy good dayes, if thou wouldest have him to remember and accept of thee in thy evil dayes : if thou neglectest God in the spring of thy years, what reason is there to think that he will regard thee when winter Age is come upon thee ? Moreover, it is not easy to Turn unto the Lord in old age : A young plant is more easily plucked up then an old tree ; so are young men with less difficulty transplanted, and plucked up out of the Soil of nature, then they that are grown old in the waves of sin. Old Diseases are hardly cured : so when men by a long continuance in a course of sin, have contracted almost incurable habits of sin, how hard a work will it be to convert them ? were it not that all things with God are possible, it could not be. Wherefore the Scripture saith, *can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots ? then may you also doe good, that are accustomed to doe evil.* Jer. 13.23. When Satan hath held possession a long time, it is not an easy work to out him, and dispose

disposses him. We read of one in the Gospel that had a most terrible dispossession, Mark 9.25,26. *Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, saying, I charge thee come out of him and enter no more into him: and the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him, and he was as one dead, inasmuch that many said, he is dead.* How difficult and how painfull was this Dispossession? Why? v.21. It is noted that the Father of that young man being enquired of, how long he had been in that condition, he said, *Of a child.* Truly, they that spend their childhood in the Service of Satan, if ever they be converted, are wont to have dreadfull Conversions at last. Therefore Young men should turn to God betimes, that so they may escape those bitter pangs, which otherwise they must expect to undergoe if ever good come of them.

From the good and benefit which doth follow upon Remembring and Turning to God betimes: as it is said, Lam.3.27. *It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his Youth:* so it is good for a man to turn to God, and to put his neck under his yoke in his Youth. It was the Saying of one, that *if it were lawfull for him to envy the happiness of any, he would envy the happiness of those that turn to God betimes*, because they are freed from a world of sin and sorrow, which otherwise they would become subject unto. And this is the way to become eminent for God. There is a wretched

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Proverb in the world, viz. *That a young Saint will prove an old Devill.* I remember [c] *Erasmus* saith, the Devill was the Author of that Proverb: For nothing can be more contrary to the Scripture. The most eminent Saints that we read of there, were such as did Remember God in the dayes of their Youth. As now, Joseph proved an eminent good man: There

*c. In pietate Juven.
Angelice Juvenis se
bus satant in armis
v. Heidefeldii fbi
Ibid. p.395.*

is reason to think that all Jacobs Children were good men before they dyed, but none of them to be compared with Joseph: and though he were the youngest but one, yet it seemeth evident that he was converted before any of his Brethren who were older then he. Job was an eminent Saint, not a man upon the face of the whole earth so good as he; and Job was one that made Conscience of his wayes even from his Youth. Job 31. 18. David was a man that attained a great measure of Grace before he dyed, and he was godly even from his Childhood. Therefore doth he speak as in Psal. 71. 5. *Thou art my hope O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth.* & again, v. 17. *O God thou hast taught me from my Youth & hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.* So that David had Faith in Christ, and was savingly taught of God even from his Youth. Obadiah was an eminent Servant of God, and he could say, *I fear the Lord from my Youth.* 1. King. 18. 22. Josiah was eminent for God, and of him we read, that *while he was young he began to seek after the Lord God of David his Father.* He was truly converted when he was but sixteen years old. 2. Chr. 34. 3. Timothy was an eminent Minister, & (as Ecclesiastical Story reports) at last he dyed a Martyr of Jesus Christ; now he was savingly acquainted with the holy Scriptures [*apo brephous*] from a little child. 2. Tim. 3. 15. Thus we see how God hath owned & blessed those that have Remembered their Creator the daves of their Youth. And for that Reason You men should Remember God.

Young men are subject to the stroke of Death well as others, Job. 21. 23. *One dyeth in his full strength.* The young man of Naim whom Christ restore life; notwithstanding his Youth, was subject to stroke of Death, Luk. 7. 14. And Jairus his daughter was but about twelve years of Age, when she

and yet he fell down from an upper Chamber, and was taken up dead, Act. 20. 9. were not Jobs Children young men? and yet they dyed suddenly. Was not Absalom a young man, and his brother Adonijah a young man when death surprized them? Did not Ely's Sons dye in the flower of their Age? 1 Sam. 2. 33. Now if young men Remember their Creator so as to repent of sin, and make sure of an Interest in Christ before death cometh, then happy shall they be. As Jeroboams good Son, though he were a child he dyed; 1 King. 14. 17. but inasmuch as in him there was found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, death did him no hurt, only he was taken away from the evil to come, that his eyes might not behold the miserable ruine, that was coming upon his Fathers Family. But if death find a young man in his sins, in an unconverted, Christless estate, woe to him that ever he was born! His naked Soul must appear before God his Creator, and receive a Sentence of eternal Damnation.

I proceed therefore to apply this Truth, by way of *USE*.
Exhortation. O let young men this day be exhorted in the Name and fear of God, to follow the counsel of the wise man, even to Remember their Creator in the dayes of their Youth. All you young men that are here before the Lord, (and there are many such in this Assembly) hear me this day, that so God may hear you another day, now turn to the Lord, now repent of sin, now make sure of an Interest in Jesus Christ, And therefore lay to heart some motives and perswasives.

Consider, what special Reason they that are of the young-ster Rising Generation in New-England have to Remember their Creator. Now there is cause for it more then ever, in that there are so few that do so. Multitudes of young men are risen up in this Land, who have been forgetting God all their dayes; unto whom the

Lord may lay as Jer. 22. 21. *This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyest not my voice.* And as it was said, concerning them of old, *the Children of Israel, and the Children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth,* Jer. 32. 30. It is true, that there are some young ones that are Remembering, & turning to the Lord, which ought to be acknowledged to the praise of his glorious grace, yet it must be said with lamentation, that the generality of the Youth in this Land, walk in wayes of looseness, profaneness, pride, drinking, gaming, or in a careless neglect of God, and of their own Souls. Hence the Lord doth not seem to take pleasure in many of the Youth of this Country. O it is a sad word that is spoken, *Isai. 9. 17. The Lord shall have no joy in their young men.* How many young men even in New-England, that have been cut off either by Sword or sickness within these two years? now shall the Lord have cause to complain as he doth by the Prophet, (*Amos 4. 10.*) *your young men have I slain with the sword, yet have you not returned unto me.* Moreover, young men in this Country enjoy means of grace plentifully dispensed, God is calling from Heaven to them, and striving with them, in the dayes of their youth, and therefore if they forget him, they will be left most inexcusable before his Judgement Seat. Yea, and many are the Children of godly Parents, and in that respect under peculiar engagement to seek and serve the Lord, who is not only their Creator, but the God of their Fathers. The God not only by right of Creation, but in respect of his holy Covenant.

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2. Consider, *How pleasing it will be to the Lord you do indeed Remember him in the dayes of your Youth.* Jer. 2. 2. *I remember the kindness of thy youth.* Heard but now, how the Lord is pleased with his fruits. When Abel brought of the firstlings of his F

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the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering, Gen. 14. 4.

we read also, now the Lord chose the Almond Tree,

Numb. 17. 8. now that's the

first Tree that blossoms. The

fruit of it is ripe in the Spring ;

[d] yea, (as writers affirm) in

the first month of the year.

So when young men shall bring

forth the fruit of Repentance,

Faith, and holiness, that plea-

seth the Lord. He hath a sp-

cial delight in young men who

truly fear and serve him, Hos.

11. 1. When Israel was a Child

then I loved him: One of the

Antients observeth that Christ

loved his youngest Disciple best. John was the be-

loved Disciple, and he is reported to be younger

at his first calling, then any of the Disciples of the

Lord Jesus. And we find in the Scripture how the

Lord blessed little Children when they came to him,

or were brought to him, Mar. 10. 13, 14, 16. They

brought young Children to him, and when Jesus saw it, he

said, suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them

[d] The Hebrew word for

Almond Tree is Sheked, wh

cometh from a Verb signifying

make fast, Jer. 1 11. beca

that Tree above all others,

let it haste to bear fruit. Flo

omnium prima Amyge

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pomum maturat. Bochar

Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c.

Drus. Miscell. Cent. 1. c.

R. Kimchi in verbo Shai

not---and He took them up in his Arms and blessed them.

You young ones hearken, would you not have the Son

of God to bless you, O come to him, now in the days

of Youth, and he will surely bless you, for his

arms are open to receive you. And such are the spe-

cifics of a gracious promise, Prov. 8. 17. They

know me early shall find me. If you will be perswa-

ded to seek the Lord whilst it is yet early days with

Christ hath promised, that you shall find him,

eternall Life and happiness by him.

Consider the danger of neglecting God in the days

of Youth. It may be it will cost thee thy life, yea, the

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life of thy Soul for ever. Who knoweth but that the Time of Youth is the only time which the Lord will allow you to repent, and make your peace with God in, through Jesus Christ? If these golden dayes be lost, probably thou wilt be undone for ever. I must needs tell you, that for the most part it is so, that men are either converted in youth or not at all. We read but of one that was called at the eleventh hour. If a Tree do not blossome in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after. So they that are not converted in the Spring of their Age, are rarely converted at all. Now and then one is converted in old Age, but such Examples are exceeding rare. Especially, it is true with respect unto those that have in the dayes of their youth lived under the means of grace, heard many Sermons, experienced frequent strivings of the Spirit of God with their hearts, if they remain unconverted until the dayes of their Youth are past and gone, the Lord usually giveth them up to Judicial hardness of heart, that they shall never be converted, never saved. Young men think sadly of it in the fear of God.

2. Consider, what Examples have been set before you, of early Conversions. Have you not read or heard of those that have turned to God in the dayes of their Youth? nay, that in their Childhood, the fear of God hath been planted in their hearts, that they have no sooner began to have the use of Reason, but one

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might discern signs and effects of grace in their souls. There is a [?] Book which many of you have in your houses, that giveth an account of thirteen Children, the eldest of them not above fourteen years old, some of them but seven years old, some not so much, that nevertheless it was evident that the fear of God and unfeigned love to Jesus Christ was wrought in their hearts. And there is a printed Relation of [?] a

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Child that dyed not long since in this Country, who for several years before his death, had his heart changed and was made a new Creature. O how may this shame many young ones that are here before the Lord this day, who yet are older then that Child was, it may be fifteen years old, nay, perhaps twenty years old; and for all that, in a natural, Christless Estate to this day. Lamentable is thy condition, that hast lived so long under means of grace, and yet continuest an unconverted Creature. God be merciful to thee, and help thee to think of it.

5. *Consider you have a great work to doe before you go out of this world, & but a little time to doe it in.* As young as you are, you have much sin to repent of, and to obtain the pardon of, Original sin thou art guilty of, and that must be mortified. And who can declare how many actual sins thou hast committed in words, thoughts, and deeds, that have been evil? and all those to repent of, and endeavour that they may be mortified: and but little time to be attending works of this nature: for what is your life? It is but a vapor that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. Jam. 4. 14. If a man have a long journey to in a winters day, he had need set out betimes, I have a long journey to goe: Is it not a long way from earth to heaven? and but a winters so dispatch this journey. When once the short of thy life is expired, then it will be too late. there is no work in the Grave whether thou art gone. O then up betimes, be going, be doing, and do be with thee.

By way of Direction.

Beware of those sins especially which they that are beir Childhood and Youth are most subject unto, and apt to be carried away from God by. 2. Tim. 2. 22. *Flee youth-lusts*, h. e. those sins which Youth is mostly expo-

A Call to the

sed unto. It is infinite mercy to be kept pure from the corruptions of Youth. If ever you should find grace to repent of the sins of Youth, and so to obtain the pardon of them, yet they will be bitterness and shame to you all your dayes. Those vanities of Youth, which now thou art so foolish as to delight in, it may be they will be a trouble to thee forty years hence, should'st thou live so long. Doth not Job complain saying, *Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.* Job. 13. 26. And did not holy David pray, as in Psal. 25. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth.* And doth not converted Ephraim make an humble confession concerning the sins of Youth, Jer. 31. 19. *I was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my Youth.* So it is, that the remembrance of the sins & vanities of Youth, are matter of reproach & shame a long time after: yea the very thought of them doth fill the soul that is truly converted, with an holy confusion of face. Beware then of the sins of Youth. To instance in some particulars, Pride is a sin that young ones are very much under the power of: hence we see that young people are strangely addicted to vanity in Apparel: Proud fashions they must and will follow, there's no perswading them to the contrary: but beware of that sin. So for stubbornness and disobedience to Superiours, it is an evil that Youth is very subject unto. You that are Servants, young men and maids that are here before the Lord; have not you been guilty of stubborn, disobedient carriage towards your Masters? though God in his word tels you that you ought to be obedient to them with fear and trembling, Eph. 6. 5. And you that are Children, have not you disobeyed your Parents? Thou hast been disobedient to thy Father sometimes, but especially to thy Mother. Thy heart may ake to think what is like to come on thee, if thou

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repent not speedily, Did you ever know any dye upon the Gallows, but they confessed they had been guilty of this sin, and thereby provoked the Lord to leave them unto those things which have brought them to untimely, unhappy ends? And this is but according to what the Scripture speaketh, Prov. 30.

17. *The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it.* Intimating that such

Children are like to come unto miserable and shameful deaths at last. Again, lying is a sin, which Childhood and Youth is for the most part deeply guilty of,

Psal. 58. 3. *They go astray as soon as they be born speaking Lyes.* How natural is it for Children to commit a

fault, and then to excuse it by telling a Lye? Art thou a lying Child? then the Devil is thy Father, and except thou repent of this sin, and beware of it for the time to come, when once thy Soul is out of thy body, it must be cast into that Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second Death, Joh. 8.

44. Rev. 21. 8. So for breaches of the seventh Commandment, they are *Youthful Lusts*. Wherefore

Solomon saith, that he looked out at the window of his house, and discerned amongst the Youths a young man void of understanding, and he was going to an

whore house like an Ox to the slaughter, or a fool to the correction of the Stocks, not knowing that it is for his life, nor considering that her house is the way

to Hell, going down to the chambers of Death, Prov.

22. 7. &c. Young men whose natures are not changed by the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, do usually live in some unclean lust or other. Either

in fornication, or self-pollution, or in secret workings of darkness. You young men whose consciences accuse you of guils before the Lord in re-

spect of these evils, I charge you in the Name of

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that you humble your selves deeply in his sight for past transgressions, and sin no more, as ever you desire to escape eternal Damnation. Though these cursed Lusts may be as dear to you as life and limbs, yet better to pluck out thy right eye, to cut off thy right hand, then that thy whole body should be cast into Hell fire, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire never shall be quenched.

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Again, Sabbath breaking is a sin which Young ones are often found guilty of before the Lord. There was a young man [g] (whom many of you have heard of) that came to an untimely end, and that sin of Sabbath breaking made way to his ruine: when he should have been hearing the word on the Lords day, he would rather go to wicked houses; that at last, God was so provoked with him, as to leave him to commit a Capital sin upon the Sabbath day, for which he was brought to deserved execution. And when in Prison, he said to some that came to visit him, *O Wretch that I was! I studied how I might spend the Lords day in the Devills work: that time which I should have served God in, I did most for Satan in it.* O (said he) tell young men from me, that the breaking of the Sabbath is a dangerous and costly sin. And therefore young men beware of that sin. Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, or you will never remember your Creator as you ought to doe.

Once more: Sinfull Company keeping is another thing that young men are apt to be drawn away from their Creator by. Many an hopefull young man, hath been well instructed, that hath had great convictions upon his spirit, and friends that wished him well, have been comforted in him; yet hath afterwards fallen in with bad Company, and that hath proved the eternal ruine of his Soul. I have known young men that upon sick-beds, and death-beds, h

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made lamentable cries, *O my sinfull Company keeping haib undone me for ever!* Therefore let young men remember what the Scripture speaketh to them, *My Son if sinners intice thee consent thou not. Walk not thou in way of them, refrain thy foot from their path,* Prov. 1. 10 15. Again, *He that walketh with the wise shall be wise; but a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed,* Prov. 13. 20 Young man, wouldest thou not be destroyed? then be not a Companion of Fools. Remember also what David saith, and follow his example, *Psal. 26. 4, 5, 9. I have not sate with vain persons. I have hated the Congregation of evill doers, and will not sit with the wicked. Gather not my Soul with Sinners.* When thou dyest, thou wouldest not have thy soul to be gathered to the place where sinners must be for ever: then sit not with them, hold not familiarity with them now: For they that are thy Companions and Familiars here, are like to be so to eternity.

2 *Hearken to good Instruction.* In the holy Scriptures God himself instructs you. And therefore let young ones be diligent in reading the Scripture, that is the way to become like unto Timothy, to whom it was said, from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through the Faith that is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. 15. And when David had propounded this Question, *wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his* Answer given is, *by taking heed thereto according to thy word,* Psal. 119. 9. For the most part it is the wayes of young men need much cleanness: youth is commonly the unclean part of a man. Those young men that will make conscience of their wayes and walkings according to the will of God, shall thereby be cleansed. And the preaching, and publick dispensing, is a means ordained by the Lord for the instruction of young ones.

• A Call to the

ones, that they may learn the fear of God, Deut. 31.
12, 13. *Gather the People together, men and women, and
Children, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and
fear the Lord your God, and that their Children which
have not known anything may learn to fear the Lord. And
therefore mind seriously what the Ministers of God
speak in his Name. Mind it young men, lest you
mourn at last, and say, How have I hated Instruction,
and have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor
inclined mine Ear to them that instructed me ! yea,
and hearken to the good Instructions which you re-
ceive from those whom God hath set over you. Have
you not Masters, Fathers, Mothers, that admonish
you and give you good counsel from day to day ! de-
spise them not. Doth not the Scripture say to you,
bear ye Children the Instruction of a Father, Prov. 4. 1
And again, *My Son bear the Instruction of thy Father.*
and forsake not the Law of thy Mother, Chap. 1. 13.
Eternal woe is like to be the portion of those Chil-
dren that regard not what Father and Mother say to
them. Remember Eli his Sons ; they were proud
and head-strong ; their Father reprov'd them, and
exhort'd them to amend their ways, it is said, *Not-*
withstanding they hearkened not to the voice of their Father
because the Lord would smite them. 1 Sam. 2. 24. Art thou
the young man that wilt not hearken to the voice of
thy Father when he giveth thee good Counsel ? This
is a sign that *the Lord will smite thee* : a sad sign that
thou art appointed to some terrible destruction at
the last.*

3. Remember those things which if duly thought on,
may cause you to Remember your Creator in the days of
your Youth. e.g. Think truly of the preciousness of
Time, that so you may pass the time of your sojourn-
ing here in fear. You young men, are exceeding
apt to mispend precious hours, nay dayes in sin and

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vanity, but it is because you do not consider how precious time is. Are not some that were once your companions in sin, dead, and (as there is cause to fear) dropped down into Hell? They would give Worlds (were it in their power) to enjoy that precious time, that is lost & can never be regained. Shortly your time to remember your Creator in, will be past and gone forever. Remember also the worth of your own souls, what shall a man give in Exchange for his Soul? If he should gain the whole world, & loose his own Soul, what is he profited? young men & children, do you think of this! As young as you are, you have immortal Souls that must be either saved or damned, that when once you are dead, your Souls must go to be either in Heaven or Hell to all Eternity. And remember Death, which may be on you, ere you be aware of it. Thou knowest not but that this night thy Soul may be taken from thee. It hath been truly said, [b] *An old man hath death before his face, but a young man hath death behind his back*, that may overtake him before he thinks of any such thing. Children may dye as well as others, Rev. 2.23. *I will kill the Children with Death.* I remember I have somewhere read, of a serious godly child, that would not speak vain words like other Children, but was careful to improve his time well, and being asked the Reason of his seriousness, O (saith he) I remember that I must dye. When some replied to him, you are young, and may live many a fair day, what should you think of Death for? *ay* (saith he) *I was in the burying place, & there I saw a grave, that was shorter then I am.* So Children, look into the burying place, and there you will see graves that are shorter then you are; there you will see that those that have been as young as you are, and younger too, have dyed and been put into their graves, and therefore it may be so with you.

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O then Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth. And remember the day of Judgement. As Solomon in this Context saith, *Know O young man, that God will bring thee to Judgement.* Young men are apt to put the thoughts of death and Judgement far away, and therefore they remember not their Creator. Think with thy self, I must stand before Jesus Christ the Son of God at the great day; and what shall I then say to him? and what will the Lord in that day say unto me? will he say, come thou blessed? or will he not say to me, depart thou cursed.

4. *Look unto Jesus Christ.* O betake your selves to him. He calls from Heaven unto you young men and children, that are here before the Lord this day, goe to him by Prayer, and to God by him. Some of you, when you are asked that Question, *do you pray,* Answer, I cannot pray. You would do it, you say, but you know not how to pray. Why, get into a secret place, and there lift up thine Eyes and heart to the Lord Jesus, and if thou can't say nothing else, yet say, *O thou Son of God have mercy on me! O convert me, and save my poor Soul!* who knoweth but the Lord from on high, may look upon thee, since the Lord Jesus himself hath said, *They that seek me early shall find me.*

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